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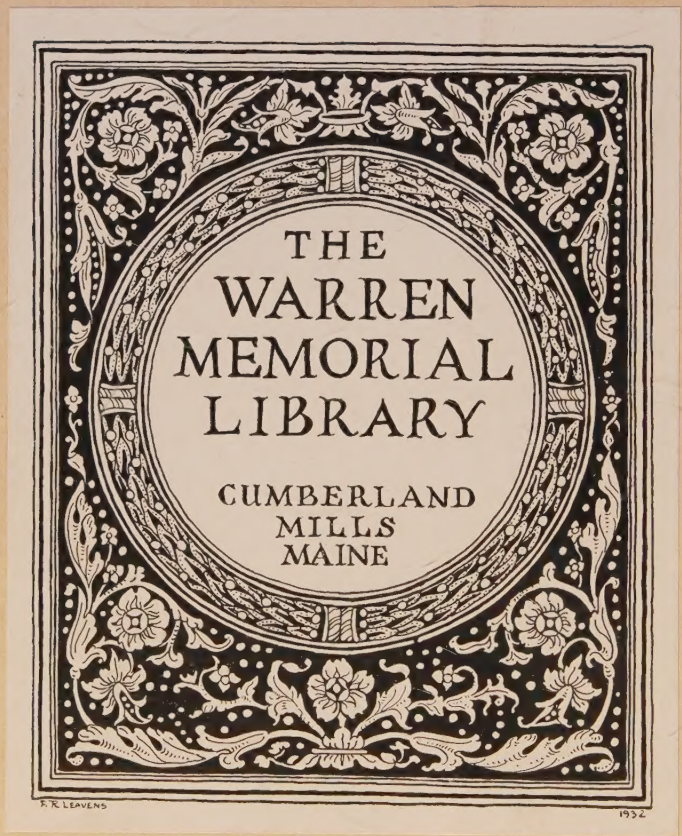
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"DIANA OF THE UPLANDS," BY C. W. FURSE, A.R.A.

Tate Gallery, London.

This delightful open-air portrait of the artist's wife—in which we can almost feel the wind sweeping across the uplands—was one of the painter's last works and was exhibited at the Academy in 1904, the year in which he was elected A.R.A. and died.

THE OUTLINE OF ART

EDITED BY

SIR WILLIAM ORPEN, K.B.E., R.A., R.I.

WITH OVER 300 ILLUSTRATIONS
OF WHICH 20 ARE IN COLOUR

IN TWO VOLUMES

★ ★

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
The Knickerbocker Press
1924

"HARE OF THE UPLANDS," BY C. W. FURSE, A.R.A.

Tate Gallery, London.

Charles William Furse was born in 1868 and died in 1904. His picture—in which we can almost feel the wind sweeping across the uplands—was one of the most talked-about pictures at the Academy in 1902, the year in which he was elected A.R.A. and died.

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The Outline of Art

XIV

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ART

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ART

THE WORK OF DAVID, VIGÉE, LEBRUN, GROS, INGRES, AND GOYA

§ 1

TO look at the calm and serene British portraits illustrated in the last two chapters, it is difficult to realise that England was engaged in warfare almost continuously during the century in which they were painted. While Reynolds, Gainsborough, and their successors were building up the reputation of English art, statesmen, soldiers, and sailors were laying the foundations of the present British Empire, Wolfe in Canada, Clive in India, and Nelson on the high seas. We have seen how profusely art flowered in England while her empire abroad was expanding, and we must now turn our attention to the progress of art in that country which throughout the century was England's constant foe.

Art in France

To appreciate the effect of the French Revolution on the painters of France, it is advisable to consider briefly the condition of artists in the eighteenth century. The French Academy, founded in 1648 for the advancement of art, had become a close body exercising a pernicious tyranny. Artists who were neither members nor associates were not allowed to exhibit their works in public, and even Academicians were not supposed to show

elsewhere: one of them, Serres by name, was actually expelled from the Academy because he had independently exhibited his picture "The Pest of Marseilles" for money. The only concession the Academy made to outsiders was to allow them once a year, on the day of the Fête Dieu, to hold an "Exhibition of Youth" in the Place Dauphine, which was open for only *two hours.*

At the last Salon held under the old monarchy in 1789 only 350 pictures were exhibited: in 1791 the National Assembly decreed that an exhibition open to all artists, French and foreign, should be held in the Louvre, and the number of pictures shown was 794. In the year of the Terror (1793) the number of exhibits exceeded a thousand; in 1795 the number of pictures shown increased to 3,048. These figures tell their own story, and show that the first thing the French Revolution did for art was to give painters a fuller liberty to display their work to the public. Further, notwithstanding the exhausted state of the finances, the Revolutionary Government encouraged artists by distributing annual prizes to a total value of 442,000 francs, and began the systematic organisation of public museums. On the 27th July, 1793, the Convention decreed that a museum should be opened in the Louvre, and that art treasures collected from the royal palaces, from monasteries, and from the houses of aristocrats who had fled the country should be placed there. At the same time a sum of 100,000 francs was voted for the further purchase of works of art.

David

While in some parts of the country an ignorant and savage mob ruthlessly destroyed many precious monuments, libraries, and art treasures, the leaders of the Revolution throughout showed a special solicitude not only for contemporary art but also for the monuments of the past. Yet while the Revolution did everything it could to foster contemporary art and to pre-

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"DONA ISABEL CORBO DE PORCEL," BY GOYA (1746–1828)

National Gallery, London.

Unrivalled as a satirist when painting people he disliked, Goya could also render marvellously, as we see here, the ethereal charm of a Spanish beauty of aristocratic lineage. At a time when all artistic Europe was in raptures over the "antique," Goya anchored his art to nature and became the greatest painter of his age.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

MME. RECAMIER, BY DAVID (1748–1825)

The Louvre, Paris.

Reputed to be the most brilliant conversationalist of her age, Mme. Recamier was famous for her "salons," which were attended by all the most eminent men of the Directory and First Empire. This refined and sympathetic portrait shows the most gracious and human side of a painter who was fanatical in his adoration of Greek and Roman art. Even the furniture in this picture is said to have been made from classical models designed by David.

serve and popularise the best art of the past, it could not produce one really great master of painting or sculpture. Now, if ever, we might expect to find a realism and a rude, savage strength in art; yet the typical painting of the French revolutionary period is cold and correct, and its chief defect is its bloodlessness. While in England the taste, as we have seen, was all for a happy romanticism in art, the taste of revolutionary France was for a stern classicism. A nation aspiring to recover the lost virtues of antiquity was naturally disposed to find its ideal art in the antique, and just as politically its eye was on republican Rome rather than on Athens, so its classicism in art was Roman rather than Greek. The man who gave a new direction to French painting was Jacques Louis David (1748-1825), who, curiously enough, was a distant relative of Boucher and, for a time, worked under that master, whose art in later years he cordially detested. Later he became the pupil of Vien (1716-1809), whom he accompanied to Rome when Vien was appointed director of the French academy in that city. In Rome David became absorbed in the study of the antique; and began painting pictures of classical subjects, which were well received when exhibited in Paris. During the Revolution David became an enthusiastic supporter of Robespierre, and though he was in danger for a time after the fall of Robespierre, he escaped the perils at the end of the Terror by wisely devoting himself to art and eschewing politics. When the Directory created the Institute of France on the ruins of the old monarchical academies, David was appointed one of the two original members of the Fine Arts section and charged with the delicate mission of selecting the other members.

Napoleon

Henceforward David was omnipotent in French art. Like so many other revolutionaries, he was completely carried away by the genius of the First Consul, who seemed to him the right

Cæsar for the new Romans. One morning after Bonaparte had given him a sitting for a head, David spoke enthusiastically of the General to his pupils. "He is a man to whom altars would have been erected in ancient times; yes, my friends, Bonaparte is my hero." But the portrait of his hero was never completed and only the head remains to-day, for Napoleon disliked long sittings and did not care for exact likenesses. What he demanded from an artist was a picture to rouse the admiration of the people, and to satisfy this demand David painted "Bonaparte crossing the Alps," "Napoleon distributing the Eagles to his Army," and similar pictures which, though correct and precise in drawing, seem cold, strained, and dull to-day.

The best works of David are not his official pictures, but some of his portraits which have more force and life. The most celebrated of these portraits is his "Madame Recamier" (see illustration facing page 237) now in the Louvre, though the painter himself did not regard it as more than an unfinished sketch which he once threatened to destroy. The sitter greatly displeased David by leaving him when the portrait was half-finished and going to his pupil Gerard (1770-1837), who had suddenly become the fashion, to have another portrait of herself painted by him. A few years later Madame Recamier, tired of Gerard's flattering portraiture, came back to David and begged him to go on with his picture. "Madame," he replied, "artists are as capricious as women. Suffer me to keep your picture in the state where *we* left it."

After Waterloo and the restoration of the Bourbons, David, who had taken so prominent a part in the revolution, was exiled from France in 1816, and not being allowed to go to Rome as he wished, he settled in Brussels, where he continued painting classical pictures, now chiefly of Greek subjects, till he died in 1825. Even in exile David was still regarded as the head of his school, and few painters of so moderate a talent have so profoundly influenced the art of Europe. He completely

Photo: Anderson.

"THE MAJA NUDE," BY GOYA

The Prado, Madrid.

This unconventional portrait of a Duchess, said to have had a weakness for the artist, is one of the most famous paintings of the nude. A companion picture exists in which the Duchess is shown in the same attitude, only clothed, and the story goes that this second picture was painted for the Duke, and the one illustrated for the artist's own pleasure.

"BONAPARTE AT ARCOLE" BY BARON GROS (1771–1835)

The Louvre, Paris.

A masterly portrayal of the young Napoleon, as he was at the beginning of his Italian campaign, by an artist who finally committed suicide because he was unable to paint in accordance with his ideals

crushed for the time being the ideals of Watteau and his school and of Boucher—"cursed Boucher," "that Boucher of ridiculous memory"—as he called him; and as a good republican he delighted other republicans by maintaining that the art of the last three Louis represented "the most complete decadence of taste and an epoch of corruption." To David and his pupils Europe owes that revival of classical subjects which was a feature of nineteenth-century painting in all north-western Europe, and France owes him in addition that tradition of fine drawing which has characterised her art for the last century.

§ 2

Vigée Lebrun

Most attractive of all portraitists of this period is the woman artist Madame Elizabeth Louise Vigée Lebrun (1755-1842). Her father, a portrait-painter himself, died when she was only twelve years old, and his daughter carried on his practice almost at once, for when she was only fifteen she was already painting portraits with success and talent. While still young she married Lebrun, a prosperous and enterprising picture-dealer, who managed her affairs well and whose stock of old masters afforded the young artist many models which she studied with good results. In 1783 Vigée Lebrun was admitted to the French Academy, and during the last years of the French monarchy she was a favourite at Court and painted several portraits of Marie Antoinette and her children. In 1789, alarmed at the way things were going in France, she went to Italy, where she was received with enthusiasm and made a member of the academies of Rome, Parma, and Bologna. Thence she went to Vienna, where she stayed three years, and subsequently visiting Prague, Dresden, Berlin, and St. Petersburg, she only returned to France in 1801. Thus she escaped the revolution altogether and saw little of the Empire, for about the time of the Peace of Amiens she came to England,

where she stayed three years, and then visited Holland and Switzerland, finally returning to France in 1809.

Entirely untouched by the revolution and by the wave of classicism which followed it, Mme. Vigée Lebrun was a cosmopolitan artist whose art belonged to no particular country and whose style had more in common with English romanticism than with the asceticism then in vogue in France. Among all her portraits none is more charming than the many she painted of herself, and of these the best known and most popular is the winning "Portrait of the Artist and her Daughter" (see Colour-Plate) at the Louvre. Though in time she belongs to the revolutionary era, Mme. Lebrun is, as regards her art, a survival of the old aristocratic portrait-painters of monarchical France.

§ 3

Baron Gros

How great was the influence of David on the painters of his generation is revealed by the tragic story of Antoine Jean Gros (1771-1835), who killed himself because he thought he was bringing disgrace on the tradition of his master. Gros entered David's studio in 1785, and though he was unsuccessful when he tried for the Prix de Rome in 1792, in the following year his master helped him to get a passport for Italy, and so Gros got as far as Genoa, where in 1796 he made the acquaintance of Josephine, afterwards Empress. Josephine carried him off to Milan and presented him to Bonaparte, who took a liking to the young man, attached him to his staff, and allowed him to paint that wonderful portrait, now in the Louvre, of "Napoleon at Arcole" (see illustration facing page 239), which is the most haunting and poetic of all the many portraits of the Emperor.

Thenceforward the career of Gros was outwardly a series of triumphs. Owing to his experiences in Italy—where, in 1799, he was besieged with the French army at Genoa—he had a closer

Copyright Photo: Eyre & Spottiswoode, Ltd.

"THE ARTIST AND HER DAUGHTER," BY E. L. VIGÉE LEBRUN (1755–1842)

The Louvre, Paris.

One of the first women-painters to reach high distinction in her art, Mme. Elizabeth Louise Vigée Lebrun painted Queen Marie Antoinette in her youth and lived late into the nineteenth century. She married very young, and this charming portrait of herself and her daughter was painted shortly before the outbreak of the French Revolution.

acquaintance with the realities of war than any of his artist contemporaries.

In Genoa and elsewhere Gros had made a particular study of the work of Rubens and Vandyck, and in his canvases he now endeavoured to emulate the opulent colour of the Flemish School. Consequently his battle-pictures were so informed with knowledge and inspired by feeling and fine colour that they aroused high enthusiasm in Paris. When his picture "Les Pestiférés de Jaffa" was shown in the Salon of 1804, all the young artists of the day combined to hang a wreath on the frame in honour of the life, truth, and colour in the work of Gros.

Already there was a beginning of a reaction in Paris against the ascetic classicism of David, and while Gros, as an old pupil of that master, still commanded the respect of the classicists, his spirited renderings of contemporary events pleased the younger generation who were later to give birth to the Romanticists. Thus, for a time, Gros pleased both camps in painting, and his position was unimpaired when Napoleon fell and the Bourbons were restored. In 1816 he was made a member of the Institute, he was commissioned to decorate the cupola of the Panthéon, and in 1824, on the completion of this work, he was created a Baron.

Meanwhile David, exiled in Brussels, was uneasy about the style of his former pupil, whom, on leaving Paris, he had left in charge of the classical movement. From Brussels he wrote constantly to Gros begging him to cease painting "these futile subjects and circumstantial pictures" and to devote his talent to "fine historical pictures." By this David meant, not those paintings of the battles of Aboukir, Eylau, the Pyramids, etc., which *were* fine historical pictures, but paintings depicting some incident in the history of Greece or Rome. These alone, according to David, were the fit themes for a noble art, and he could not accept the rendering of events of his own times as true historical pictures. Unfortunately Gros, in his unbounded veneration for his old

master, took David very seriously. He saw with alarm that the younger generation of painters were departing from the classical tradition and heading for romanticism, and he blamed himself for leading them astray.

In the very year when he was made a Baron, his fellow-pupil, Girodet (1767-1824), died, and at the funeral of this follower of David, Gros lamented the loss of a great classic artist, saying: "For myself, not only have I not enough authority to direct the school, but I must accuse myself of being one of the first who set the bad example others have followed."

Conscience-stricken at falling away from his master's ideals, and particularly so when David died in the following year, Baron Gros now did violence to his own talent by forcing himself to paint subjects of which David would have approved. While the truth of his war pictures had shocked the Classic school, the artificiality of his new classical pictures roused the mocking laughter of the young and increasingly powerful Romantic school. His "Hercules and Diomed" in the Salon of 1835 was openly sneered at; the younger critics treated him as a "dead man," till wearied out and depressed by the disgrace and shame which he thought he had brought on the school of David, poor Baron Gros, on the 25th June, 1835, lay down on his face in three feet of water at Meudon, where on the following day two boatmen discovered his body.

Ingres

That leadership of the Classic school, for which Baron Gros, both by his art and his temperament, was utterly unfitted, was eventually assumed with honour and credit by his junior, Jean Dominique Auguste Ingres (1780-1867). A pupil of David and the winner of the Prix de Rome in 1801, Ingres was not at first regarded as a "safe" classic by the purists of that school. To these pedants, who worshipped hardly any art between the

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"LA SOURCE," BY INGRES

The Louvre, Paris.

Begun as a study in 1824, this exquisite work, the painter's masterpiece, was taken up again in 1856 and completed when Ingres was seventy-six. It is unrivalled as a happy blending of truth to nature with ideal beauty.

Photo: [illegible] & Co.

"JOAN OF ARC AT RHEIMS," BY INGRES

The Louvre, Paris

The [illegible] drawing in this picture [illegible] illustrates the point of view of the artist, who said, "A thing well drawn is always well enough painted."

antique and Raphael, Ingres was suspicious because of his loudly proclaimed admiration of the Italian primitives. On his way to Rome, Ingres had stopped at Pisa to study the frescoes by Benozzo Gozzoli and his contemporaries in the Campo Santo. "We ought to copy these men on our knees," said the young enthusiast, and his words were repeated to David, who regarded them as ominous.

Though he gained the prize in 1801, Ingres was not sent to Rome till 1806, and then he remained in Italy for nearly eighteen years. These were years of quiet fruitful labour during which the artist, in his own words, was "drawing to learn and painting to live," and by living abroad he escaped all that contemporary drama of victories and disasters, of changes of dynasties and changes of opinion, that was going on during this period in his own country. Nevertheless, from Italy he sent pictures now and again to Paris, where they attracted attention in the Salons, though they were criticised by the followers of David. When he exhibited in 1819 his "Paola and Francesca di Rimini" (see illustration facing page 248), the work was pronounced to be "Gothic" in tendency, and in this small historical painting we can recognise the influence of the Primitives whom Ingres admired for the purity and precision of their drawing.

When Ingres returned to Paris in 1824 the battle between the classicists and the romanticists was in full swing, and with Girodet dead, David in exile and dying, and Gros incompetent, the former were glad to welcome the support of Ingres and soon made him the chief of their party. Ingres was amazed and enchanted at his sudden popularity and the honours now thrust upon him. He was speedily elected to the Institute, and later was made a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour and a Senator. The full story of the war between the classicists and romanticists must be reserved for a later chapter, but it may be said at once that Ingres threw himself heart and soul into the championship of the classics by precept and example.

But where Ingres differed from his predecessor David was, that with him it was the treatment rather than the subject which was all-important. A fanatic for drawing from the first, he held strong and peculiar views on Colour. "A thing well drawn is always well enough painted," he said; and his own use of colour was merely to emphasise the drawing in his pictures. "Rubens and Vandyck," he argued, "may please the eye, but they deceive it—they belong to a bad school of Colour, the School of Falsehood." From his early Roman days Ingres had shown himself to be a faultless draughtsman of the human figure, and his drawings and paintings of nudes are the works on which his fame most surely rests to-day. The most celebrated, and perhaps the most beautiful, of his works, "La Source" (see illustration facing page 242), has an interesting history, for, though begun as a study in 1824, it was not till 1856, when the artist was seventy-six, that he turned it into a picture. One of the most precious gems of painting in the Louvre, this picture preserves the freshness of a young man's fancy while it is executed with the knowledge of a lifetime. "It is a fragment of nature, and it is a vision," is the comment of a great French critic on this picture.

If Ingres was the greatest artist the classical movement produced in France, yet he belongs too much to the nineteenth century to be considered a true product of the revolutionary and Napoleonic period. Indeed, the greatest Continental artist of that period was not a Frenchman, and it is to Spain that we must turn to find a man of outstanding genius whose protean art fully expresses the surging thoughts and feelings of this time of changes.

§ 4

Art in Spain

The life-story of Goya is as full of storm and stress as that of his unhappy country, which between 1788 and 1815 saw more misery and more changes of government than any other country

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE BEWITCHED," BY GOYA

National Gallery, London.

A priest, frightened by demons in the form of jackasses, hurriedly pours oil into a lamp held by a goat. In this painting of a scene from a comic play, the artist satirises the Spanish clergy of his time and hints his opinion of the value of the "light" they profess to throw on the unknown.

Photo: Anderson.

"A MILITARY EXECUTION IN 1808," BY GOYA

The Prado, Madrid.

In this tragic picture of the execution of Spanish volunteers by Napoleon's soldiery, Goya reveals his sympathy with the patriots and his horror at the brutality of warfare. Goya was the first artist to attack Militarism.

in battle-scarred Europe. Under the rule of Charles IV and his depraved consort, Queen Maria Louisa, Spain was in a miserable condition; its court was a frivolous, shallow imitation of Versailles, and its monarchy and government were even more rotten and more corrupt than those of France under Louis XVI. A young lieutenant of the Guards, Manuel Godoy, was made Prime Minister because he was the Queen's favourite lover, and the king was a puppet in the hands of this Spanish Messalina. Public offices were openly sold to the highest bidder, and eighteen thousand priests drained the purse of the people and stifled their intellects. Art seemed dead and past the hope of revival till Goya came to Madrid.

Goya

Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes was born on March 30, 1746, that is to say, twelve years after Romney, and ten years before Raeburn. He was the son of a peasant in a village in Aragon, and legend relates that, like Giotto, he was found drawing sheep by an amateur who recognised the boy's talent and sent him in his fourteenth year as pupil to a painter in Saragossa. There the boy grew up strong, handsome, wild and passionate, continually involved in love affairs and quarrels. In one of the last, three men were left wounded and bleeding, and as a result of this midnight affray Goya had to leave the city hurriedly.

In 1766 he was in Madrid, and there his adventurous disposition soon got him into trouble. He was wounded in some love quarrel, placed under police supervision, and chafing at this restraint he escaped from the city with a band of bull-fighters and sailed to Italy. At the end of the sixties he was in Rome, where he appears to have been much more interested in the teeming life of the people than in the antiquities of the city. Here again his amorousness got him into trouble, for it is said that one night he made his way into a nunnery, was nearly captured, and only escaped the gallows by a headlong flight from the city.

In 1771 he returned to Saragossa and found shelter in a monastery, where he seems to have reformed his manner of living, for four years later this scapegrace adventurer, the hero of a hundred fights, reappeared in Madrid as a respectable citizen, married to the sister of Bayen, a painter of good standing. Through his brother-in-law he got to know people of a better class, and he was finally introduced to the Court and permitted to paint the portrait of Charles III.

Goya's pictures of this period reflect the manners of the Spanish court, for pictures like "The Swing" and "Blind Man's Buff" at Madrid are as obviously imitations of Watteau and his school, as the Spanish court imitated the artificiality of Versailles, only Goya, a cynic from his youth, does not give his figures the daintiness of the Frenchmen. With almost brutal realism he depicts the rouge on the women's cheeks and the pencilling of their eyebrows, and seems to take a delight in unmasking their falseness and dissipation. While he was intelligent enough to perceive the rottenness of Spanish society, Goya was no moralist himself and lived the life of his time. Countless stories are told of his relations with women of high society, and Goya is said to have been the terror of all their husbands. In this connection one inevitably thinks of his famous double picture at Madrid, "The Maja Nude" (see illustration facing page 238) and "The Maja Clothed," the latter being an almost exact reproduction of the former with the garments added, and these are so filmy, so expressive of the limbs underneath, that the second picture has justly been said to reveal a woman "naked in spite of her dress." The story runs that the lady was the Duchess of Alva, and that when the Duke desired to see Goya's work, the painter hurriedly produced the clothed portrait and concealed the other.

When Charles IV came to the throne Goya became still more firmly established in Court favour, though he produced the most impudent portraits of royalty that have ever been painted. Nowhere can we find a more pitiless exposure of serene stupidity

Photo: Anderson.

"CHARLES IV ON HORSEBACK," BY GOYA

The Prado, Madrid.

Uncompromisingly truthful even in the portrayal of Royalty, Goya shows this King of Spain, who was a puppet in the hands of his dissolute wife, as "a monument of serene and complacent stupidity."

Photo: Anderson.

"THE BULL-FIGHT," BY GOYA

Accad. S. Fernando, Madrid.

The artist, who painted all conceivable aspects of Spanish life, could not ignore this national institution, and in his paintings of bull-fights Goya displays a professional knowledge of the sport which he gained in his youth, when he ran away once with a band of bull-fighters.

than his "Charles IV on Horseback" (see illustration facing page 246). "He sits there, asthmatic and fat, upon his fat asthmatic horse . . . like a Moloch," says Dr. Muther, "an evil god who has battened upon the lifeblood of his people." When he painted the Queen Maria Louisa, Goya portrayed her as the brazen old courtesan she was; he shows up the Crown Prince as a sly, spiteful, hypocritical meddler, and the favourite minister Godoy as a nincompoop and a panderer. When the French novelist Gautier first saw Goya's large portrait group of the Spanish Royal Family and its favourites, his comment was, "A grocer's family who have won the big lottery prize"; and that is exactly the impression the picture gives us, a collection of stupid, ill-bred people who owe their fine clothes and position to no talent or merit of their own but to sheer luck. It is amazing that this daring satirist of royalty should have gone unpunished and unreproved, but the King and his family circle were themselves too stupid to realise that the artist was holding them all up to the ridicule of the world.

As while outwardly a courtier he insidiously undermined the pretences of the Spanish monarchy, so while appearing to respect the observances of Catholicism, Goya surreptitiously attacked the Church which was blinding the eyes of the people. In 1797 he began to produce a series of engravings which, under the title of "Caprices," pretended to be nothing more than flights of fancy, but which were in reality biting satires on the social, political, and ecclesiastical conditions of his age. He drew devout women with rolling eyes worshipping a scarecrow, priests drawling out the Litany with obvious indifference, and in one fantastic plate—which he had the audacity to dedicate to the King!—he showed a corpse rising from the grave and writing with its dead finger the word *Nada,* i.e. "Nothingness." It was tantamount to saying that the hope of immortality held out to the people was only a blind to make them endure want and misery without murmuring, while kings and priests grew fat at their expense. If the Court and

high ecclesiastics were too stupid to comprehend Goya's message the people understood, for the revolutionary era was at hand.

A more subtle example of Goya's anti-clerical tendency is the little picture in the National Gallery, "The Bewitched" (see illustration facing page 244), in which, while professing to do no more than paint a stage scene from a popular comedy of the time, the artist shows us a priest frightened by demons in forms of a goat and jackasses.

Like most of the intellectual men in Spain, Goya had at first welcomed the coming of Napoleon, for anything seemed to promise a hope of better things than the old regime. But, later, the piteous spectacle of his country in the throes of warfare seemed to rouse the patriot in him, and he began to champion its rights in a series of the most moving paintings and engravings. In 1810 he began to execute a series of engravings entitled "The Disasters of War" which were absolutely a new thing in art. Hitherto artists, with few exceptions, had shown only the imposing side of war, its panoply and splendour, its daring and heroism. Goya was the first artist to make a deliberate and systematic impeachment of Militarism. Not only did he refuse to glorify the old adage that "it is sweet and decorous to die for one's country," but he persistently showed all the blood and misery with which military glory was bought. In his engravings of the war he shows the unchaining of the "human beast," and his prints of the torturing of prisoners and the shooting of deserters are ghastly in their revelation of raging madness and the distortions of death agonies.

In his paintings also Goya told the terrible story of the tragedies which ensued when the Spanish volunteers took up arms against Napoleon's soldiery. There is no more awful war picture in the world than Goya's painting of an incident in 1808 (see illustration facing page 245), in which we see the gleam of the gun-barrels, and the poor wretches who have been condemned by court-martial falling forward prone before the musket-fire

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"PAOLO AND FRANCESCA DI RIMINI," BY INGRES (1780–1867)

Chantilly.

An early example of the painting of this master, showing the delicacy and precision of his line and the extent to which he was first influenced by the work of the Italian primitives. While Paolo is embracing Francesca, her husband, Malatesta, is seen in the background drawing his sword to slay his brother Paolo.

of the troops. The despair of the condemned and the cold-blooded energy of the executioners are appalling.

Yet while he lamented the sufferings of the patriots during the Peninsular War, Goya could not rejoice at the restoration of the Bourbons after the fall of Napoleon. For when King Ferdinand returned to Madrid in 1814, Goya saw that all hope of liberalism and freedom of thought had vanished, and that the powers of darkness, which for the time had been scared away, again settled on the land and obscured truth, progress, and enlightenment. The last "disaster of the war" was the resettlement of the Bourbons, who had "learnt nothing and forgotten nothing," on the throne of Spain, and Goya with his old fearlessness expressed his view of the matter in his engraving "The Death of Truth," in which he showed the naked figure of Truth suffering martyrdom at the hands of the priests.

We might expect that this outspoken work would have proved too much even for the most stupid priest-ridden Court to swallow, but nothing that Goya could do ever brought home to royalty what the artist really thought of them and their government. King Ferdinand confirmed Goya's appointment as Court Painter and even persuaded him to paint a portrait of him in the purple mantle of Empire, but now the artist himself was too old and too sick at heart to play the hypocrite at Court and paint grandees with his tongue in his cheek. Gradually Goya withdrew from public life and established himself in a simple country house on the outskirts of Madrid. His wife and son were both dead, since 1791 he had himself been afflicted with deafness, and in this villa the lonely painter lived out his life in company with his art. His last protest against the tendencies of the time were some small paintings of the interiors of prisons and torture-chambers, in which he reminds us that the Inquisition had again raised its head under King Ferdinand. Among his last works were scenes of bull-fights of the details of which Goya, in his youth had acquired a professional knowledge. Greatly as all humanitarians

must detest this horrid sport, its colour and movement appeal to the artistic sense, and the decorative aspect of the scene is the dominant note in Goya's rendering of this subject.

After nine years of this lonely life Goya seems to have felt himself no longer very secure in Spain. Perhaps he feared that the clerics would in the end perceive his purpose and have their revenge on him. At all events, in 1824 he sought and obtained leave of absence for six weeks to visit the sulphur springs of Plombières in Lorraine on account of his gout. But this appears to have been merely an excuse to get out of Spain, for he never went to Plombières, but after visiting Paris, settled at Bordeaux, where, on April 16, 1828, he died as the result of a stroke of apoplexy. In his last years he was not only stone-deaf but half blind, and consequently his creative work in France was small, but one engraving remains to show that the old cynic never swerved from his faith and still had hope for the future. "Lux ex tenebris," is the pregnant title of this work of his old age, and in it he shows us a shaft of light falling on a dark spot of earth (Spain?) and scaring away from it owls, ravens—and priests!

XV

THE RISE OF LANDSCAPE PAINTING

THE RISE OF LANDSCAPE PAINTING

THE ART OF CLAUDE, GEORGE MORLAND, J. M. W. TURNER, GIRTIN, DAVID COX, AND DE WINT

§ 1

THE greatest difference between the art of the nineteenth and that of the preceding centuries is the increasing importance attached to natural scenery. The old Masters were not altogether inattentive to inanimate nature, but it did not occur to them that scenery alone could be a sufficient subject for a picture. In the East, as we shall see in a later chapter, Nature had always preoccupied the minds of the finest artists, and in China landscape was regarded as the highest branch of art; but in Europe men thought otherwise, and it was only slowly that landscape crept forward from the background and gradually occupied the whole of the picture.

Claude

The artist who is usually considered to have been the Father of Modern Landscape Painting was a Frenchman, or rather a Lorrainer, Claude Gellée (1600-82), born near Mirecourt on the Moselle, who at an early age went to Rome, where he remained practically for the rest of his life. Claude's interest was entirely in nature, and particularly in the illumination of nature. He was the first artist who "set the sun in the heavens," and he devoted his whole attention to portraying the beauty of light; but though his aerial effects are unequalled to this day, and though

his pictures were approved and collected in his own day by the King of Spain, Pope Urban VIII, and by many influential Cardinals, yet the appreciation of pure landscape was so limited then that Claude rarely dared to leave figures out of his pictures, and was obliged to choose subjects which were not simply landscapes but gave him an excuse for painting landscapes.

Nobody to-day pays very much attention to the little figures in Claude's "Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca" (facing page 266) at the National Gallery. We are not disposed to ask which is Isaac and which Rebecca, or to try to discover what all these figures are doing, because to us the beauty of the landscape is an all-sufficient reason for the picture's existence. Our whole attention is given to the beautiful painting of the trees and the lovely view that lies between them, to the golden glow of the sky, to the flat surface of the water with its reflected light, and to the exquisite gradations of the tones by which the master has conveyed to us the atmosphere of the scene and the vastness of the distance he depicts.

Similarly in his "Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba" (facing page 267) we are at once conscious that the glorious rendering of the sun in the sky and of its rays on the rippled surface of the sea constitute the principal interest of the picture; this was what primarily interested the painter, and his buildings, shipping, and people are only so many accessories with which he frames and presents to us his noble vision of light. But to Claude's contemporaries these titles and the figures which justified them had far more importance than they have to us, and it was by professing to paint subjects which the taste of his day deemed elevating and ennobling, that Claude was able to enjoy prosperity and paint the landscapes which are truly noble.

Another Frenchman, also a contemporary of Claude, Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665), must be regarded as a pioneer of landscape painting, though he was also a figure painter of great ability who upheld the classic style of the antique in his Biblical

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE ALEHOUSE DOOR," BY GEORGE MORLAND (1763–1804)

National Gallery, London.

A pioneer of democratic art, Morland painted the every-day life around him; his boon companions were frequently his models. His rustic scenes, happy in their simple truth and fresh harmonious colour, have the charm and interest of authentic human documents.

Photo W A Mansell & Co.

"CROSSING THE BROOK," BY TURNER

National Gallery, London.

Painted in 1815, this beautiful picture illustrates the second manner of Turner, and in its classical arrangement shows how he was influenced by Richard Wilson. The river seen in the middle distance is the Tamar, which divides Devonshire from Cornwall, and looking towards Plymouth and Mount Edgcumbe we see Calstock Church beyond Poulston Bridge. Thus, though idealised by the painter's imagination, the scene is founded on fact.

and pagan figure subjects. Poussin also worked chiefly at Rome, and, having no son, adopted his wife's younger brother, Gaspar Dughet, who became known as Gaspar Poussin (1613-75), and under his brother-in-law's tuition developed into an excellent landscape painter. Both the Poussins are well represented in the National Gallery, and they and Claude have had a considerable influence on English landscape art.

We have already seen how Richard Wilson endeavoured to popularise landscape painting in England, and it will have been noted that so long as he also pretended to paint classical subjects, as in his "Niobe," he had a moderate measure of success; but when he painted pure landscape, as in "The Thames at Twickenham," the taste of his day could not follow him, and his finest work was ignored and went begging.

§ 2

According to a great historian, Dr. S. R. Gardiner, much of the best literature of the early nineteenth century was inspired by the "better side" of the French Revolution, "its preference of the natural to the artificial, and of the humble to the exalted." This same preference is clearly visible in the art of George Morland (1763-1804).

George Morland

Morland, who was born in London on June 26, 1763, was the son and the grandson of artists. His father, Henry Robert Morland (1730-97), discovered his son's talent at an early age, and proceeded to force it with unparalleled avarice and tyranny, so that his unfortunate son had no life at all outside the garret in which he was kept earning money for the needy household. George Morland began drawing when he was three; at the age of ten he was exhibiting in the Royal Academy, but while his hand and his eyes were trained to accomplish remarkable feats of painting, the rest of his education was absolutely neglected, so

that he grew up empty-headed, with a great longing to escape the paternal tyranny and be able to enjoy himself.

Inevitably, when he did at last break away from his father, he plunged into dissipation, and divided his time between drinking and painting. In 1786 he married and pulled himself together for a time, but he was so fond of his liberty that he refused an offer from Romney of £300 a year for three years to be his assistant, and preferred to ramble about the country painting rustic scenes and spending too much time and money in alehouses.

For a little while, before his health was ruined by drink, he was in easy circumstances, for his paintings of domestic scenes and farm life were exceedingly popular, and he was better known to the people than any of his august contemporaries. All his principal works were engraved, and these coloured prints after Morland's pictures found their way into many humble homes. It is probable that his well-known painting at the National Gallery, "The Interior of a Stable" (facing page 260), was painted about 1791, which would nearly coincide with the period of Morland's greatest prosperity. The stable is said to be that of the White Lion Inn at Paddington, where Morland once had as many as eight horses, but partly owing to his drinking habits and partly owing to his unbusinesslike methods his prosperity soon dwindled.

Notwithstanding his dissipation—and a day rarely passed in which he was not drunk—he was not idle, for Morland was the author of four thousand pictures and of a still greater number of drawings. But his intemperance and his dependence on dealers gradually impoverished his art, and the man who had a genuine love and understanding of country life and ought to have been one of the world's greatest rustic painters, sank into "pot-boiling," painting what the dealers wanted instead of what he wanted to do himself. His terms were four guineas a day—and his drink! Morland had got into the state when he "didn't care,"

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"THE FIGHTING 'TEMERAIRE' TOWED TO HER LAST BERTH," BY J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.

National Gallery, London.

The *Temeraire* fought at Trafalgar in 1805, and was broken up in 1838. With poetic imagination Turner visualises her last voyage, the old man-of-war looking almost ghostly in the silvery light of the moon, while the sun is setting on the tug that tows her home.

though in his sober moments he must have seen the irony and impropriety of a man of his character painting Hogarthian moralities like "The Fruits of Early Industry," "The Effects of Extravagance and Idleness," and so forth. Indeed, these in his own day were Morland's most popular works, and though some of them show the degeneration of his drawing and his carelessness in their "woolly" rendering of form, even to the end a little painting more carefully handled and jewel-like in colour will now and again show what a great painter he might have been. His last miserable years, 1800-4, were spent in a debtor's prison, yet even here, with a brandy bottle always handy, he was still industrious, and for one dealer alone during this period he painted 192 pictures. At the early age of forty-one George Morland died, completely wrecked, the victim of his own want of education and of roguish employers.

§ 3

Turner

The establishment of landscape in the popular estimation as a branch of art, equal to the highest achievements of portraiture or historical painting, was finally achieved by Turner, the greatest glory of British art. Joseph Mallord William Turner was born, appropriately enough, on Shakespeare's birthday, April 23, 1775; appropriately, because he was destined to become the Shakespeare of English painting. He was the son of a London hairdresser in humble circumstances, who lived and had his shop at 26 Maiden Lane, Covent Garden. As a boy he showed ability as a draughtsman and colourist, and his father exhibited some of the lad's drawings in his shop, where now and again they found a purchaser. One or two artists who went to the elder Turner to be shaved noticed his son's drawings, and urged the father to give his son a proper artistic training. So at the age of eleven young Turner was sent to the Soho Academy and had lessons from Thomas Malton, who grounded him well in perspective,

and also from Edward Dayes; and in 1789, when he was fourteen, he was admitted to the school of the Royal Academy.

Meanwhile he was managing to support himself by selling a few sketches now and then, by putting in backgrounds for architects who wanted nice drawings to show their clients, and by colouring prints for engravers. While tinting prints for John Raphael Smith (1752-1812), the mezzotinter, who made a fortune by engraving the work of Morland, Turner met the brilliant water-colourist, Girtin, with whom he made friends, and Girtin introduced him to the friendly house of Dr. Thomas Monro at 8 Adelphi Terrace. Here the two young men and other students were welcome every evening, for Monro was an enthusiastic connoisseur who had a studio fitted up for his *protégés* to work in; he gave them oyster suppers, a few shillings for pocket-money when they had nothing of their own, and free medical attendance if they became ill.

In 1797 Turner exhibited his first oil picture, a study of moonlight, at the Royal Academy, but most of the views he painted at this time were in water-colour. In 1792 he was commissioned to make a series of topographical drawings for a magazine, and this enabled him to make the first of those sketching tours which ever afterwards were a feature of his artistic life and to which we owe his enormous range of subject. In the following year he opened his own studio in Hand Court, Maiden Lane, where he exhibited and sold the drawings he had made on his tours.

Turner never had any difficulty in making a living, and we may account for his success where so many other landscape artists had failed by the fact that he established his reputation in water-colour before he proceeded to oils. From the time of Richard Wilson there had always been a demand for topographical drawings in water-colours, and Wilson's contemporary, Paul Sandby, R.A. (1725-1809), the "father of water-colour art," was one of the first to popularise landscape by going

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"ULYSSES DERIDING POLYPHEMUS," BY TURNER

National Gallery, London.

Never in the history of art had the flaming splendour of a sunrise been so gloriously depicted in vivid colours as when Turner painted this picture in 1829.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"KIRKSTALL ABBEY," BY GIRTIN (1773–1802)

South Kensington Museum, London.

A masterly example of the water-colour art of this short-lived painter, of whom Turner said, "Had Girtin lived, I should have starved."

about the country and sketching gentlemen's mansions and parks. Landowners were pleased to purchase his and other artists' water-colours of views on their estates, and their pride in their own property was gradually converted by these artists into a real appreciation of the beauties of nature.

At Dr. Monro's house Turner met John Robert Cozens (1752-99), a most poetic painter in water-colours and the son of a water-colour artist, Alexander Cozens, who died in 1786; and while Turner owed most to his diligent study of nature, he always owned his obligation to Cozens, who was indeed his immediate predecessor in water-colour and the first to produce those atmospheric effects which Turner rivalled and excelled.

In 1799, at the age of twenty-four, Turner was elected an associate of the Royal Academy, and henceforward, surer of himself and his public, he eschewed the merely topographical imitation of landscape for a nobler art. He looked beyond the mere details to a larger treatment of nature, seizing all the poetry of sunshine, and the mists of morn and eve, with the grandeur of storm and the glow of sunset. In feeling his way to this period of his first style Turner looked not only to nature but also to the example of his great predecessors, Claude, Richard Wilson, and the Dutch painters of the seventeenth century. The influence of the Dutch School, and particularly of Van de Velde, is apparent in many of these early works, even in "Calais Pier" (facing page 264), which, painted in 1803, was held by Ruskin to be "the first which bears the sign manual and sign mental of Turner's colossal power." Already, however, Turner had improved on Van de Velde, who was never able to interpret weather so truly and vigorously as it is painted in the rolling sea and windy sky of this stimulating sea-piece.

The year before this picture was painted, Turner was elected R.A. (1802), and during the succeeding years he spent much time in travelling, visiting France, Switzerland, Italy, and

the Rhine, and producing innumerable water-colours, as well as some of his finest oil-paintings.

That splendour of the sky, which was to be the peculiar glory of Turner, is first indicated in his "Sun rising through Vapour," painted in 1807, and it was possibly because this was the first picture in which he was able to obtain the effect after which he strove most earnestly that he was so attached to this picture. He sold it, but twenty years later, at the De Tabley sale of 1827, he bought it back for £514 10*s.* in order that he might bequeath this to the nation, together with his "Dido Building Carthage" (facing page 261), on condition they should be hung in perpetuity beside Claude's "Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca" and "Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba." Conscious of his own powers and confident in the verdict of posterity, Turner was jealous of other painters' fame, and he was enraged at the way in which English connoisseurs extolled the pictures of Claude while they neglected his own works.

The pictures already mentioned, together with the lovely "Crossing the Brook" (facing page 255), a view near Weir Head, Tamar, looking towards Plymouth and Mount Edgcumbe, also painted in 1815, may be regarded as the chief masterpieces in oils of Turner's first period. After 1820 a great change was manifest in his manner of painting. In the early paintings dark predominated, with a very limited portion of light, and he painted solidly throughout with a vigorous and full brush; but his later works are based on a light ground with a small proportion of dark, and using opaque touches of the purest orange, blue, purple, and other powerful colours, Turner obtained infinitely delicate gradations which produced a splendid and harmonious effect. This new manner is first seen in his "Bay of Baiæ," painted in 1823, and six years later, in 1829, it is revealed in all its glory in one of Turner's most beautiful and poetical works, "Ulysses Deriding Polyphemus," in which, as Redgrave has said, "while in no way gaudy, it seems impossible to surpass

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"A WINDY DAY," BY DAVID COX (1783–1859)

National Gallery, London.

Among all the remarkable landscape artists of his day, David Cox was notable for the freedom of his handling and his vigorous rendering of weather. In this picture we can almost feel the wind that is blowing across the common in the face of the woman with her dog.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"INTERIOR OF A STABLE," BY GEORGE MORLAND (1763–1804)

National Gallery, London.

But for drink, which wrecked his career and brought about his death at the age of 41, Morland might have been one of the greatest of English painters. He was the author of 4,000 pictures, but owing to his intemperance most of them are mere "pot-boilers," and few approach the excellence of this work, which shows what the artist might have done had he been industrious and sober.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"DIDO BUILDING CARTHAGE," BY TURNER

National Gallery, London.

The artist loved this picture (painted in 1815) so much that he once declared his wish to have it wrapped round his dead body and buried with him. He changed his mind, however, and bequeathed it to the nation, directing that it should always be hung beside Claude's masterpiece as a perpetual challenge.

the power of colour which he has attained, or the terrible beauty in which he has clothed his poetic conception." In this glorious picture, "a work almost without a parallel in art," the nominal subject has little more power over us to-day than it has in the Claudes. Turner's painting attracts us primarily, not as an illustration to a familiar story from Homer, but as a glowing piece of colour, a magnificently decorative transcription of a flaming sunrise. And with all this the picture is a "magic casement" through which our imagination looks out on a world of romance, for in this colour is all the intoxication of triumph, of final victory after perils escaped, and though Turner himself probably did not know it, and few who look upon his masterpiece are conscious of the fact, this picture subconsciously expresses the elation, the pride, and even the touch of insolence, that all England felt after her victorious issue from the Napoleonic wars.

As Turner altered his style of oil-painting, so also he revolutionised his practice in water-colour. Originally, in common with the older members of the Early English Water-colour School, Turner began a drawing by laying in the gradations of light and shade with grey or some other neutral tint, and afterwards represented the hue of each object by tinting it with colour; but this he found resulted in a certain heaviness of aspect. Accordingly, in his later water-colours he proceeded to treat the whole surface of his drawing as colour, using at once the pigments by which the scene might most properly be represented. By delicate hatchings he achieved wonderful qualities of broken hues, air tints, and atmosphere, so that the view when finished glowed and sparkled with the brilliance of nature's own colours. This method of putting on the colour direct, without any under-painting of the subject in light and shade, has been to a great extent the foundation of modern painting.

Determined to outshine his fellows Turner had a habit, dreaded by other artists, of coming to the Academy on Varnish-

ing Day armed with his paint-box and putting a brilliant touch or two on his own canvas when necessary to heighten its effect if its brilliance happened to be in any way challenged by that of a neighbouring picture. The brightness of the yellows and reds in his "Fighting *Temeraire* being Towed to her Last Berth" (see Colour-Plate) is said to be due to after-touches put on to "kill" a highly coloured painting by Geddes which hung near it in the Academy of 1839. Towards another landscape painter Turner was merciless, but he had respect and kindly feeling for Sir Thomas Lawrence, and on one occasion he darkened a landscape of his with lamp-black because it injured the effect of pictures by Lawrence on either side.

As he grew older, and particularly after his visit to Venice in 1832, Turner became more and more ambitious of realising to the uttermost the fugitive radiances of dawn and sunset. Light, or rather the colour of light, became the objective of his painting to the exclusion of almost everything else, and few of his contemporaries could follow him as he devoted his brush more and more to depicting the pageant of the heavens. His work when exhibited was severely criticised and held up to ridicule and mirth by Thackeray and other wits; he was regarded as a madman and accused, as other artists after him have been, of "flinging a pot of paint in the public's face." Even "The Fighting *Temeraire,*" which seems to us so poetic to-day in its contrast of moonlight with sunlight to match the contrast between the sailing-ship that was passing away and the steamer that heralded the future, even this work was deemed to be exaggerated and extravagant, and to most of the admirers of his earlier pictures paintings like "The Approach to Venice" were utterly incomprehensible.

Fortunately, Turner was now independent of patrons and could paint as he liked. During the earlier part of his career he had amassed a considerable fortune, a great part of which was derived from the engravings of his works, for he was a good

business man, able to drive a close bargain with publishers, and clever enough to retain an interest in his works. He had commenced in 1808 the series of etchings known as the "Liber Studiorum," and the excellence of these plates—now of great rarity and value—had led to his employment as an illustrator, and his fame was greatly increased and extended by the beautiful work he did for books like Rogers' *Italy* and *Poems, The Rivers of France, Southern Coast Scenery,* etc. He had a fine studio at what is now 23 Queen Anne Street, and he also owned a house at Twickenham, where he lived with his father, who had retired from business and made his home with his son from about 1807 till his death in 1829. Here, with his father and an old housekeeper, Turner led a retired life; but though habitually taciturn and reserved, he could be jovial at a convivial gathering of artists which he now and then attended.

In 1840, when Turner was sixty-five, he met a young man of twenty-one fresh from Oxford, who, from the time he first saw the illustrations to Rogers' *Italy*, had worshipped the genius of Turner, and was destined to become his persistent and most eloquent champion. This was John Ruskin, who, in 1843—the year in which Turner painted "The Approach to Venice"— published the first volume of his *Modern Painters,* an epoch-making book, the real subject of which was the superiority of Turner to all painters past and present. Henceforward, however others might laugh at and ridicule his magical colour visions, Turner now had an enthusiastic defender whose opinion yearly became more authoritative and more widely respected. It is no exaggeration to say that to the constant eulogy of Ruskin is due in no small measure the universal esteem in which Turner is held to-day.

Though he never married, Turner had a natural liking for a quiet domestic existence, and after his father's death he began to lead a double life. Under the assumed name of Booth he formed a connection with a woman who kept a house at 119

Cheyne Walk, where he had been accustomed occasionally to lodge, and "Puggy" or "Admiral" Booth became a well-known character in Chelsea, where he was reputed to be a retired mariner of eccentric disposition, fond of his glass, and never tired of watching the sun. On the roof of the house in Cheyne Walk there was a gallery, and here "Mr. Booth" would sit for hours at dawn and sunset. The secret of his double existence was not discovered till the day before his death, for he had been accustomed to absent himself from Queen Anne Street for long intervals and therefore was not missed. Suddenly those who knew him as Turner learnt that the great artist was lying dead in a little house at Chelsea, where his last illness had seized him, and where he died on December 19, 1851. The body was removed to the house in Queen Anne Street, and afterwards buried in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Turner left a fortune of £140,000, and after making a number of small annuities left the bulk of it for the benefit of art and artists, but his will, drawn by himself, was so vague and unskilfully framed that, after four years' litigation a compromise was arranged on the advice of the Lord Chancellor. The Royal Academy received £20,000, which it set aside as the Turner Fund for the relief of poor artists not members of their body, and the National Gallery acquired the magnificent gift of 362 oil-paintings, 135 finished water-colours, 1,757 studies in colour, and thousands of drawings and sketches. The task of sifting, arranging, and cataloguing the water-colours and sketches which Turner bequeathed to the nation was rightly placed in the sympathetic hands of his great advocate, John Ruskin.

The life of Turner, as we have seen, was full of strangeness and contradictions, and it is possible he may have inherited some of his eccentricities from his mother, a woman of fierce temper, who eventually became insane. There was little correspondence

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"CALAIS PIER," BY J. M. W. TURNER, R.A. (1775–1851)

National Gallery, London.

This picture, painted in 1803, shows the English Packet arriving off Calais while French fishermen are preparing for sea. It is considered to be the first masterpiece of Turner's early style, and reveals the artist's power of painting *weather* when he was still in his twenties.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"NATURE," BY LAWRENCE

After the Engraving by G. T. Doo.

In the title of this charming study of two children, Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., pays his tribute to the nature-worship which distinguished the opening years of the nineteenth century.

between his art and his life, for, as Mr. E. V. Lucas has justly said: "Turner's works are marvels of loveliness and grandeur; Turner was grubby, miserly, jealous, and squalid in his tastes. He saw visions and glorified even what was already glorious; and he deliberately chose to live in houses thick with grime, and often to consort with inferior persons." The evidence before us compels us to believe that he was really happier as "Puggy Booth" with a few cronies in a Chelsea bar-parlour than as "the famous Mr. Turner" in the company of his patron, Lord Egremont, or in the hospitable mansion of Mr. Fawkes of Farnley Hall.

§ 4

Girtin

Jealous as he was of other painters, there was one of his contemporaries for whose art Turner had nothing but admiration. "Had Girtin lived," he once said, "I should have starved," and he roundly admitted that painter's "White House in Chelsea" to be better than anything of his own up to that time. Thomas Girtin was born in 1773 at Southwark, where his father was a rope manufacturer, and, like Turner, he was for a time the pupil of Dayes. But for his short life—for he died in 1802 at the early age of twenty-seven—he would probably have rivalled Turner as a painter in oils, and though his career was cut short he lived long enough to make himself one of the greatest of our painters in water-colours. In this medium his style was bold and vigorous, and by suppressing irrelevant detail he gave a sense of grandeur to the scenes he depicted. His chief sketching-ground was the Northern Counties, and particularly its cathedral cities, and his favourite subjects were the ruins of our old abbeys and castles, and the hilly scenery of the north. The water-colour at South Kensington of "Kirkstall Abbey" (facing page 259) is a fine example of his power to present his subject with truth and majesty.

De Wint

A younger fellow-student with Turner and Girtin in the hospitable house of Dr. Monro was another artist who achieved fame chiefly as a painter in water-colours. This was Peter De Wint, born at Stone in Staffordshire in 1784. His father was a Dutch physician belonging to an old and respected Amsterdam family who settled in England. Peter, his fourth son, was originally intended for the medical profession, but was allowed to follow art, and placed with the engraver, John Raphael Smith, in 1802. Five years later he was admitted to the Royal Academy School, and the same year (1807) he exhibited at the Academy for the first time, sending three landscapes, and thereafter he exhibited there occasionally till 1828. But his reputation was principally made by the drawings he contributed to the Water-colour Society, of which he was elected an associate in 1810 and was long one of the chief ornaments.

De Wint loved to paint direct from Nature, and was never so happy as when in the fields. His subjects are principally chosen in the eastern and northern counties, and though often tempted to extend his studies to the Continent, the love of England and English scenery was so strong that, except for one visit to Normandy, he never left these shores. He formed a style of his own, notable for the simplicity and breadth of his light and shade, and the fresh limpidity of his colour. He was a great purist in technique and objected to the use of Chinese white and body colour, which he thought tended to give a heavy effect to a drawing. He excelled in river scenes, and "The Trent near Burton" (facing page 266), in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, is a beautiful example of his tender and faithful rendering of a typical English scene.

David Cox

While De Wint excelled in painting the placid aspects of landscapes, his contemporary, David Cox, was at his best on a

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE TRENT, NEAR BURTON," BY DE WINT (1784–1849)

South Kensington Museum, London.

Dutch by descent, though born in England, De Wint was at his best in painting flat stretches of river scenery under a placid luminous sky. This water-colour of a hayfield with a hay-barge on the river is a happy example of his rural idylls.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE MARRIAGE OF ISAAC AND REBECCA," BY CLAUDE

National Gallery, London.

When this picture was painted in 1648, the beauties of natural scenery were so slightly appreciated that it was politic for an artist to put in figures and pretend he was illustrating a story from the Bible even when, as here, his whole interest was in a lovely landscape.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE EMBARKATION OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA," BY CLAUDE (1600–82)

National Gallery, London.

One of the earliest and one of the grandest endeavours to paint the actual source of light, this picture has for two centuries been an inspiration to landscape painters by the beauty of its sky and the sunlight shining on the water.

windy day or in stormy weather. Cox was the son of a blacksmith and was born at Deritend, a suburb of Birmingham, on April 29, 1783. During his school-days he had an accident and broke his leg, and this misfortune proved to be his good fortune, for having been given a box of colours with which to amuse himself while he was laid up, young David made such good use of the paints that his parents perceived the bent of his genius, and when he was well again apprenticed him to a painter. David Cox received his first tuition from an artist who painted miniatures for lockets, but when his master committed suicide young Cox went to the other extreme of painting, and at the age of seventeen he became an assistant scene-painter at the Birmingham Theatre. It is said that he even took a small part now and then at this theatre, which was then managed by the father of Macready.

From Birmingham David Cox went to London to paint scenery—at four shillings a square yard!—in the Surrey Theatre, varying this work with sepia drawings which he sold to a dealer at two guineas a dozen for school copies. Meanwhile he made every endeavour to improve his art and took lessons from John Varley (1778-1842), an artist of refined accomplishment, who was one of the founders of the Water-colour Society in 1804. Varley, who had had his own struggles before he made a position for himself as one of the best water-colourists of his time, liked Cox so much and thought so highly of his talent that he would not allow the young man to pay him for his lessons.

Under Varley's tuition Cox rapidly improved his art and his circumstances; he was able to quit the theatre and earn money in his turn by giving lessons, and in 1805 he made his first visit to Wales, where he discovered Bettws-y-Coed, ever after to be his Mecca. On his return he exhibited his Welsh water-colours, which attracted some attention, and in 1808 he married and settled down in a little house on Dulwich Common. Here he gave lessons to pupils and polished his own art by the diligent

study of the surrounding scenery, learning to render the varied effects of Nature and the aspects of morning, noon, and twilight. In 1813 he was elected a member of the Water-colour Society and became one of the principal contributors to its exhibitions.

In 1829 he made a tour on the Continent, choosing his subjects on the coasts and in the market-places of Antwerp and Brussels, and the crowded bridges of Paris, but he liked best the scenery of his own country, particularly the mountainous country of Wales and Scotland, whose gloomy passes he painted with great effect and grandeur. He also painted many views of the Thames and of the country round London, but till he was past fifty he worked exclusively in water-colours.

In 1839, however, when he was fifty-six, Cox became acquainted with a young Bristol painter, William James Müller (1812-45), who had just returned from a long journey through Greece and Egypt. Müller was himself a very brilliant colourist and a skilful painter in oils; the man and his work made a deep impression on Cox, who studied Müller and watched him at work, and henceforward devoted himself more to oils than to water-colours. About 1841 Cox left London and settled at Greenfield House, Harborne, near Birmingham, and there, with an annual excursion of some weeks to his beloved Bettws-y-Coed, he lived till the day of his death on June 7, 1859. During these later years Cox gave himself chiefly to oil-painting; his best pictures were seldom seen in London during his own lifetime, and when shown were not generally appreciated. It was only after his death that his merit as an oil-painter became widely recognised.

Whether in oil or in water-colour the work of David Cox is distinguished by its light, its vigour, and its spaciousness. His picture "A Windy Day" (facing page 260), also known as "Crossing the Common," is a happy example of the scene and weather he excelled in rendering.

XVI

NATURAL LANDSCAPE

NATURAL LANDSCAPE

THE ART OF CONSTABLE, BONINGTON, CROME, AND COTMAN

§ 1

UNQUESTIONABLY the two greatest English painters of landscape, and probably the two greatest English painters of any kind, were Turner and Constable, who were born within a year of one another. Turner, as we saw in the last chapter, amassed a large fortune; Constable, on the other hand, could hardly earn a bare living, and not until 1814, when the artist was thirty-eight, did he sell a picture to any but his own personal friends.

How was it that, from a worldly point of view, Constable failed where Turner succeeded? The explanation is to be found in the totally different character of the landscapes painted by these two artists. Turner, as Claude had done before him, made frequent use of nominal subjects as an excuse for his pictures of nature; there was a dramatic element in his art which appealed to the popular imagination, and even when, as in many of his later works, people found difficulty in apprehending the elements of his style, they were insensibly affected by the splendour of his colour and brought to admit that these pictures, if difficult to understand, were paintings in the "grand style."

Constable never made use of fictitious subjects and titles as an excuse for painting landscapes. His works were wholly free from any dramatic or foreign interest, and following the example of the Dutch landscape painters of the seventeenth

century, he whole-heartedly devoted himself to painting the simple, homely beauty of the scenery in his native land. He modestly confessed that he thought there was room for a "natural painter," and by this he meant a painter who would devote himself to painting as truly as he could the beauty of nature without importing into his pictures any extraneous reference to Homeric legend or to events in the past or present.

His landscapes were long unappreciated because they appealed to a pure love of nature which was not fully awake in the artist's lifetime. "My art," said Constable a little bitterly in his middle years, "flatters nobody by imitation, it courts nobody by smoothness, tickles nobody by petiteness, it is without either fal-de-lal or fiddle-de-dee; how can I then hope to be popular?"

John Constable

John Constable was born on June 11, 1776, nearly fourteen months, to be precise, after the birth of Turner. He was the son of a miller who owned watermills at Flatford and Dedham and two windmills at East Bergholt in Suffolk. It was at the mill house in East Bergholt that John Constable was born, and here he passed the greater part of his youth. His father wished him to enter the Church, but Constable had no inclination in this direction, and after he had finished his education in the local school, at the age of eighteen he assisted his father in the mill at East Bergholt which figures in so many of his landscapes.

Meanwhile his love of nature and art was encouraged by a great amateur who happened to have his seat in the neighbouring county of Essex and was quick to recognise the talent of young Constable. Sir George Beaumont (1753-1827) was something of a painter himself, he had been a pupil of Richard Wilson; and he was an enthusiastic patron of art and artists. He had peculiar ideas about colour, and his well-known saying

"FLATFORD MILL," BY JOHN CONSTABLE, R.A.

National Gallery, London.

At a time when fashionable opinion held that "a good picture, like a good fiddle, should be brown," Constable dared to paint nature truly in her own colours and became the pioneer of "natural" landscape painting.

Flatford Mill belonged to the artist's father, and it was while assisting his father as a boy that Constable acquired his knowledge and love of nature.

that "a good picture, like a good fiddle, should be brown," was not helpful to a painter like Constable, who saw the lovely greens in nature and painted them as he saw them; but at this time Constable was a beginner, and the friendly encouragement and advice of Beaumont decided Constable's career.

One of the best things about Sir George Beaumont, to whose zeal and generosity we owe in large measure the establishment of the National Gallery, was his unremitting efforts to make England appreciate the genius of her own artists. As a young man he had waggishly shown up the ignorance of the public and its ridiculous passion for foreign artists by advertising in the newspapers that a wonderful German had arrived in Bond Street who could take likenesses by a new method of heating the mirror in which the sitter looked, and for ever fixing and preserving the reflection! On the next day a crowd of fashionable folk flocked to Bond Street, only to be laughed at by the practical joker and his friends.

Sir George Beaumont not only encouraged young Constable to go on with his sketching, but lent him works which might serve as models for his practice. Among these were two water-colours by Thomas Girtin, which Constable always maintained set his feet firmly in the right road, and also Claude's "Landscape with the Angel appearing to Hagar," a work Beaumont so loved that he took it about with him wherever he travelled. In 1826 he gave this with fifteen other pictures to the nation, but finding he could not live without it he asked for it back till his death, which occurred in the following year. This Claude is now in the National Gallery.

The opinion of this artist-baronet naturally carried weight with Constable's father, and as a result of his influence John Constable was permitted to go to London in 1795 to study art. Here he was encouraged by Joseph Farington, R.A. (1747-1821), who communicated to him some of the precepts he had himself derived from his master Richard Wilson, and in 1799

Constable, through Farington's influence, was admitted to the Royal Academy Schools. Although the first painting Constable exhibited at the Academy was a landscape, shown in 1802, he began his professional career as a portrait-painter, which was then the only profitable branch of art. But after painting some portraits and altar-pieces for Brantham in 1804 and for Nayland in 1809, he came to devote himself more or less exclusively to landscape, which was the true bent of his genius. He felt he could paint his own places best, he delighted in the flats of Dedham, with its trees and slow river "escaping from milldams, over willows, old rotten planks, slimy posts, and brickwork"; and so he finally settled down as the painter of the rural scenery among which he had been born. In 1803 he had written, "I feel now, more than ever, a decided conviction that I shall some time or other make some good pictures; pictures that shall be valuable to posterity, if I do not reap the benefit of them."

These words were prophetic, and for some years almost the only patrons the young artist had were a kindly uncle and his friend Archdeacon Fisher, the nephew and chaplain of the Bishop of Salisbury. Had Constable been content to be a merely topographical artist as Farington and most of the older water-colourists were, he would probably have found it easier to sell his works and make a respectable income; but from the first it was his desire not merely to paint "portraits of places," but to give a true and full impression of nature, to paint light, dews, breezes, bloom, and freshness. The multitude of his sketches—of which a fine collection may be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington—show how earnestly and assiduously he studied Nature in all her aspects to attain this end, and though a love of nature and of truth is discernible even in his earliest works, it was only gradually that Constable acquired the breadth and freedom which distinguish his later works.

If we compare even so beautiful an example of his early style as "Boat-building near Flatford Mill" (see illustration

facing page 283), painted in 1815, with "The Hay Wain" (see illustration facing page 281), painted in 1821, we at once perceive the tremendous advance made by the artist in the intervening six years. It is not altogether without significance to note that the greatest strides forward in his art were made during the early years of his married life, and it may not unreasonably be surmised that the happiness of his private life and domestic contentment compensated Constable for public neglect and helped to give him increased confidence in his own powers.

A Happy Marriage

It was in 1816 that he married Maria Bicknell, with whom he had been in love since 1811, and the correspondence between the two during these five years—several letters of which still exist—shows the simple nature of the writers and the complete trust each had in the other. The marriage was delayed owing to the long opposition of Constable's father, and eventually it took place against his wishes, but there was no serious breach between father and son, and neither Constable senior nor Mr. Bicknell, who was also very comfortably off, allowed the young couple to be in actual want. Two years before his marriage Constable had for the first time sold two landscapes to total strangers, but as yet he had no real success and the young couple set up house modestly at 76 Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square.

In 1819, when Constable was forty-three, he exhibited at the Academy a large landscape, "View on the River Stour," which was keenly appreciated by his brother artists and resulted in his being elected an Associate, and in the following year his love of nature led him to take a house at Hampstead.

When "The Hay Wain" was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1821 it attracted comparatively little attention, but three years later it was sold to a French collector, who sent it to the Paris Salon in 1824, where it created a veritable sensation. Constable was awarded a gold medal, and his picture had

an immediate and lasting effect on French art. His pure and brilliant colour was a revelation and an inspiration to French painters, and under the glamour of "The Hay Wain" Delacroix, the leader of the French Romanticists, obtained leave to retouch his "Massacre of Scio" in the same exhibition. In a fortnight he repainted it throughout, using the strongest, purest, and most vivid colours he could find, and henceforward not only were Delacroix's ideas of colour and landscape revolutionised by Constable's masterpiece, but a whole school of French landscape painters arose, as we shall see in a later chapter, whose art was to a great extent based on the example and practice of Constable.

It was in France, then, that Constable had his first real success, and Frenchmen were the first in large numbers fully to appreciate his genius. It is a piece of great good luck that "The Hay Wain" ever came back to England, but fortunately it was recovered by a British collector, George Young, and at his sale in 1866 it was purchased by the late Henry Vaughan, who in 1886 gave it to the National Gallery.

In 1825 Constable, now possessing a European reputation though still neglected in his own country, sent to the Academy his famous picture "The Leaping Horse," which is generally considered to be his central master-work, though many shrewd judges consider that the essence of his fresh, naturalistic art is still more brilliantly displayed in the big preparatory six-foot sketch of the same subject (see illustration facing page 282), now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. It was Constable's habit to make these large preparatory sketches for pictures of special importance, and the great difference between the sketch and the picture is that the former was done in the open, directly from nature, while the latter was worked up in the studio. Consequently the sketch always contains a freshness and vigour, something of which is lost in the picture, though this last sometimes has refinement of design not to be found in the sketch.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE CORNFIELD," BY JOHN CONSTABLE, R.A. (1776–1837)

National Gallery, London.

Though much admired by the discerning when it was first exhibited at the Academy in 1826, this brilliant example of Constable's genius remained unsold till after the artist's death, when a number of his admirers clubbed together to buy the picture from his executors and presented it to the nation. The church in the distance is Stratford St. Mary, Suffolk.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"A WINDMILL ON MOUSEHOLD HEATH," BY JOHN CROME (1768–1821)

National Gallery, London.

Founder of the Norwich School, Crome devoted his life to painting the beauties of the country round his birthplace, and never attempted to establish himself in London. His feeling for light, air, and space are splendidly revealed in this noble landscape.

For example, in the "Sketch for the Leaping Horse," the bent willow is to the right of the horse and its rider, as it doubtless was in the scene that Constable actually beheld; but in the picture of "The Leaping Horse" in the Diploma Gallery of the Royal Academy, the tree is shifted to the other side of the horse and rider, more to our left, in order to improve the design and emphasise the rhythm of the diagonal accents from the big tree on our left to the water-weeds in the opposite lower corner. This transposition of the willow-tree is exceedingly instructive, for it proves that Constable did not, as some have maintained, simply paint "snap-shots" of nature; he understood the science of picture-making as well as any artist, and while desirous above all of presenting the *general* truth of the scene before him, he did not scruple to alter the position of one particular tree or other object if thereby he thought he could improve the composition of his picture.

Constable was now fifty, but still he was only an A.R.A. Neither "The Leaping Horse" nor "The Cornfield" (see illustration facing page 276), which he exhibited in 1826, moved his brother artists to make him an Academician, and though "The Cornfield" attracted a good deal of attention and was one of the first pictures to make Constable talked about in London, it did not sell, but remained in his possession to the day of his death. There would seem to be no denying that to the end a number of Academicians were unable to appreciate the genius of Constable, and after the death of Joseph Farington in 1821 he had no keen admirer with influence within their ranks. The story is told that one year, after he had at last been elected R.A. in 1829, Constable submitted one of his works labelled with another name to the Academy jury. When the majority had voted for its rejection, Constable admitted his authorship and quietly remarked, "There, gentlemen, I always thought you did not like my style of painting."

When official recognition came it was "too late," as Con-

stable sadly said. Fortunately he was not in want, for in 1828 his wife's father had died and left Constable the sum of £20,000. "This," wrote Constable, "I will settle on my wife and children, and I shall then be able to stand before a six-foot canvas with a mind at ease, thank God!" From this exclamation it would certainly appear as if the painter himself took more pleasure in his six-foot sketch than in painting a picture from it for the market.

Any pleasure he might have experienced in his election to the Academy as a full member in 1829 was counteracted by his grief at the loss of his wife, who had just previously died. It was the thought of this faithful companion and helper that prompted Constable to say his election as R.A. was "too late."

David Lucas

Though it would be a gross exaggeration to say that Constable ever obtained anything like popularity in his own lifetime, his landscapes after 1831 began to be known to a wider public by virtue of the mezzotints of some of his best paintings by David Lucas (1802-81). Lucas was an engraver of genius, who brilliantly translated into black-and-white the beauties of Constable's light and shadow, but when he first approached the artist for permission to engrave his work Constable was dismally despondent about the project. "The painter himself is totally unpopular," he said, "and will be so on this side of the grave. The subjects are nothing but art, and the buyers are wholly ignorant of that." Nevertheless Lucas persisted with his mezzotints, which did much to spread the fame of Constable, and these engravings are now eagerly sought for at high prices by collectors.

Though never becoming actually despondent or embittered, Constable naturally craved for the appreciation which he felt he deserved, and in the endeavour to court notice he even went so far as to advertise in the newspapers:

"Mr. Constable's Gallery of Landscapes, by his own hand, is to be seen *gratis* daily, by an application at his residence."

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"GRETA BRIDGE," BY COTMAN

British Museum, London.

The artist's masterpiece in water-colour, majestic in design, splendidly strong and massive in its drawing, and rich and harmonious in colour.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"SALISBURY CATHEDRAL" BY CONSTABLE

South Kensington Museum, London.

One of Constable's earliest patrons and most constant friends was the Rev. John Fisher, nephew and chaplain to the Bishop of Salisbury. Owing to this friendship the artist painted several pictures of the Cathedral, among which this painting is notable for the brilliance and beauty of its lighting.

But few except other artists applied, and as he grew older his house became fuller and fuller of unsold pictures. After his sixtieth birthday in 1836 his health became uncertain, and on March 30, 1837, he died suddenly in his house at Hampstead. Almost immediately after his death the world awoke to his genius, and in the same year a number of gentlemen who admired his work clubbed together and bought from the executors his picture "The Cornfield," which they presented to the nation. Strangely enough this artist, who was so little known during his own lifetime, has since his death become a familiar personality, thanks to the pious solicitude of his friend the genre-painter C. R. Leslie (1794-1859), whose "Memoirs of John Constable, R.A." is one of the best biographies of a painter ever written. It is a classic which, for the intimate insight it gives us into the character of the man, may be compared with Boswell's *Johnson.* All who met Constable were attracted by his simple, kindly, affectionate nature, and perhaps the most touching tribute to his memory was paid by a London cab-driver who, when he heard that he would never drive Constable again, told Leslie he was "as sorry as if he had been my own father—he was as nice a man as that, sir."

Leslie had always been a firm believer in the genius of Constable, and wrote of his works: "I cannot but think that they will attain for him, when his merits are fully acknowledged, the praise of having been the most genuine painter of English landscape that has yet lived." Subsequent generations have corroborated Leslie's opinion, and another genre-painter, Sir J. D. Linton, who was born three years after Constable's death, has testified to the genius of Constable and to the effect of his painting. "His art," wrote Linton, "has had the widest and most lasting influence both at home and abroad. . . . Although Turner is accepted as the greatest master of landscape painting, and his work has not been without very great influence, Constable's robust and massive manner has affected the modern schools more universally."

While we admire Turner we love Constable the more dearly, perhaps because his art is so essentially English. Never did a landscape painter travel less than Constable in search of a subject. While Turner toured all over Europe, Constable opened his door and found beauty waiting to be painted. With exceptions so few that they do not bulk largely in his work, all Constable's landscapes are drawn either from his birth-place, that is to say the borders of Essex and Suffolk about the Stour, now known as "the Constable Country," or at Hampstead, where his house yet stands. The hill with a clump of firs on it, close to the Spaniard's, is to this day spoken of as "Constable's Knoll." His only other sketching ground of real importance was Salisbury, whither he was doubtless drawn by his friendship with the Rev. John Fisher. Of his many paintings of Salisbury Cathedral, one of the most beautiful is the painting (see illustration facing page 279) in the South Kensington Museum, from which we see that had his bent been that way Constable could have painted architectural subjects as truly and beautifully as he did landscapes.

It was the supreme distinction of Constable to destroy Beaumont's fallacy that a "brown" landscape was a "good" landscape, and to paint all the greenness in nature. He loved to paint the glitter of light on trees after rain, and the little touches of white paint with which he achieved the effect of their sparkle were jocularly alluded to as "Constable's snow." No painter before him had painted with so much truth the actual colour of nature's lighting, and since Constable the true colour of nature in light and shadow has increasingly become the preoccupation of the "natural" landscape painter.

§ 2

Bonington

Constable was not the first nor was he the last English painter whose art was appreciated in France long before his

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE COLUMN OF ST. MARK'S, VENICE," BY R. P. BONINGTON (1802–28)
National Gallery, London.

Though he died when he was only twenty-six, this artist greatly influenced his contemporaries by his rich colour and romantic feeling. Had he lived he would undoubtedly have been one of the greatest artists of his time.

The view shown is of the Piazetta at Venice, with the column supporting the winged lion of St. Mark and the companion column, on the right, which is crowned by a statue of St. Theodore, the first patron saint of Venice.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co. *Reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Manchester.*

"THE HIRELING SHEPHERD," BY W. HOLMAN HUNT (1827–1910)

Manchester Art Gallery.

One of the three founders of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Holman Hunt was throughout his life the most faithful adherent to that accurate observation of Nature which was its early ideal.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE HAY WAIN," BY CONSTABLE

National Gallery, London.

Almost unnoticed when shown at the Academy in 1821, this picture created a sensation when it was exhibited in the Paris Salon of 1824. Constable was awarded a Gold Medal, and his example led French artists to adopt a new and truer style of landscape painting

talent was duly recognised in his own country, and it may be argued that his triumph at Paris in 1824 was to some extent anticipated by the warm welcome which the Parisians had already given to his young compatriot Richard Parkes Bonington. The father of Bonington was an extraordinary man who had originally succeeded his father as governor of the Nottingham country gaol, but he lost this appointment through his irregularities and then set up as a portrait-painter, while his wife kept a school which was the real mainstay of the family. His son Richard was born at Arnold, a village near Nottingham, on October 25, 1801, and at an early age showed a talent for drawing which made him another infant prodigy, like Lawrence.

Meanwhile his father's love of low company, intemperate habits, and violent political opinions had broken up his wife's school, and about the time of the fall of Napoleon the family fled to France, first to Calais and then to Paris. Henceforward Richard Parkes Bonington, though still a boy, was the chief breadwinner for the family. In 1816 he obtained permission to copy pictures at the Louvre, where he was said to be the youngest student on record, and he also worked in the studio of Baron Gros, where his improvement was so rapid that his master soon told him he had nothing more to learn from him, and advised him to go out into the world and paint from nature on his own account. This advice Bonington took, travelling extensively in France and also visiting Italy in 1822. His oil-paintings and water-colours, which were exceedingly rich in colour and full of vitality, were quickly appreciated and the reputation of Bonington rapidly increased in Paris. In 1824, when Constable received his gold medal, another gold medal was also awarded to Bonington for the two coast scenes which he had sent to the Salon.

Though he had visited England now and again, Bonington was quite unknown here till 1826, when he exhibited at the British Institution two views on the French coast which surprised the

English painters and at once gave him a name among his own countrymen. In the following year he exhibited another marine subject at the Academy, and in 1828—though still residing in Paris—he sent to the Academy a view on the Grand Canal, Venice, and a small historical painting of "Henri III of France." Though but twenty-seven years of age, Bonington for some time had been greatly esteemed in France, and now commissions flowed upon him from England also. Anxious to fulfil them, the artist worked feverishly during the hot summer and after a long day sketching under a scorching sun in Paris he was attacked by brain fever, followed by a severe illness. When his health had slightly improved he came over to London for medical advice, but it was too late. He had fallen into galloping consumption, and the brilliant promise of his career was cut short by his death on September 23, 1828. He was buried in the vaults of St. James's Church, Pentonville.

The early deaths of Girtin and Bonington were the two greatest blows British art had received, and had they lived it seems probable that Bonington might have gone even further than Girtin. His range for his years was remarkably wide, and he was as skilful in painting figures as he was in landscapes and marine subjects. His art was picturesque, romantic, and often dramatic, while he had an opulent sense of colour and was able to imbue his figure paintings with a wonderful sense of life. In the Louvre, Paris, where the artist studied as a boy, the examples of Bonington's art are more numerous and important than those at the National Gallery, London, which possesses two only, a Normandy landscape, bequeathed by Mr. George Salting, and "The Column of St. Mark, Venice" (see illustration facing page 280). Happily Bonington's work is well represented in the Wallace Collection, where there are ten of his paintings and twenty-four water-colours, among the former being the picture of "Henri IV and the Spanish Ambassador," which so long ago as 1870 fetched the considerable price of £3,320 in a sale at Paris.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"STUDY FOR THE LEAPING HORSE," BY CONSTABLE

South Kensington Museum, London.

This magnificent six-foot sketch, painted direct from nature in 1825, gives the essence of Constable's fresh, naturalistic art.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"WHERRIES ON THE YARE," BY JOHN SELL COTMAN (1782–1842)

National Gallery, London.

So little was the genius of Cotman appreciated in his own day that this beautiful painting was sold at Norwich in 1834 for eighteen shillings!

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"BRIGHTON BEACH WITH COLLIERS," BY CONSTABLE

South Kensington Museum, London.

The vigour and freedom of the artist's later style is seen in this thickly painted sketch of Brighton on a breezy day.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"BOAT-BUILDING NEAR FLATFORD MILL," BY CONSTABLE

South Kensington Museum, London.

This peaceful scene, painted in 1815, is a perfect example of Constable's early style before he had acquired the vigour and freedom which distinguish his later works.

§ 3

"Old Crome"

Another great landscape painter who during his lifetime never took the place in the world that his genius warranted was John Crome, frequently called "Old Crome," to distinguish him from his son, who also became a painter. Crome, who was born at Norwich on December 21, 1769, was the son of a poor weaver and began life as an errand-boy, carrying bottles of medicine for a doctor, but when he was about fourteen or fifteen his love of art led him to apprentice himself to a house and sign painter. While following his trade during his apprenticeship, Crome took every opportunity of sketching the picturesque scenery which surrounds his native city. He was very, very poor, but he persevered and his perseverance gained him friends.

Chief among these friends was Mr. Thomas Harvey, of Catton in Norfolk, who possessed a fine picture gallery and encouraged Crome to study and make copies of the pictures he had collected. Mr. Harvey's collection included landscapes by Richard Wilson—by whom Crome was greatly influenced—Gainsborough's "Cottage Door," and many fine examples of the Dutch painters of the seventeenth century, notably Hobbema, for whose art Crome then conceived a passionate admiration which lasted all his life. Mr. Harvey not only introduced Crome to other Norwich amateurs, but also obtained him some pupils to whom he taught drawing, though at this time the artist was only an awkward, uninformed country lad, whose deficiencies of education were to some extent compensated for by his great gifts and his natural shrewdness.

Meanwhile Crome had formed an intimate friendship with a lad of his own class, Robert Ladbrooke (1770-1842), then a printer's apprentice, but also ambitious to become an artist. After living together for some two years, Crome and Ladbrooke married sisters, and abandoning their original trades they estab-

lished themselves in partnership as artists, Ladbrooke painting portraits at five shillings apiece, and Crome selling his landscapes for what they would fetch—which was not always as much as five shillings! But for Crome's practice as a drawing-master he could hardly have kept himself, let alone a family, in these early years, but gradually he acquired a local reputation and his landscapes found occasional purchasers, though at pitifully low prices.

The Norwich School

In February, 1803, Crome gathered round him the artists of his native city for their mutual improvement, and from this beginning arose the Norwich Society of Artists, founded in 1805. The Society held annual exhibitions to which Crome was a large contributor, for he rarely sent his pictures to London for exhibition and consequently was little known there. Crome's pupils and associates, among whom the most distinguished were John Sell Cotman, James Stark (1794-1859), George Vincent, and his eldest son John Bernay Crome, formed what is known as the "Norwich School." The inspiration of this school was derived chiefly from Crome, but also from the Dutch painters by whom he was influenced.

The Norwich School prospered exceedingly, more so than any other body of provincial artists has ever done in England, and their success was due not only to the excellence of their own work but also to the fact that they laboured in a field well prepared to receive art. It will have been observed how many of the great English landscape painters belonged to the Eastern Counties—Gainsborough and Constable were both Suffolk men—and the extent to which the art of all of them was influenced by the art of Holland. The explanation is to be found in the intimate trade relations which had existed for centuries between East Anglia and the Netherlands. Owing to this commercial intercourse numbers of Dutch and Flemish pictures found their way into

East Anglian homes, and while London during the eighteenth century worshipped Italian art almost to the exclusion of all other, well-to-do people in Norfolk and Suffolk took a keener delight in the homelier art of the Dutch and Flemish Schools. Thus at the very time that Constable was being neglected in London, John Crome was enjoying esteem and wide popularity in Norfolk.

It is true that Crome never made a fortune, to the end his lessons brought him in more money than his paintings, for any of which fifty pounds was a long and rarely attained price; but Crome did sell his pictures and in time became quite comfortably off. In 1801 he moved into a big house in Gildengate Street, he kept two horses, and managed before his death to acquire many good pictures and to form a library. Norwich was proud of her distinguished painter, and a special seat was always reserved for him in the parlour of the old inn in the market-place, where in his later years he was treated as an oracle revered by all.

Under these circumstances we can understand why Crome continued to reside in his native Norwich and was never tempted to settle in London. In 1806 he exhibited for the first time at the Royal Academy, but between then and 1818 he only sent thirteen pictures in all to be exhibited there. He visited London occasionally, twice he went to Cumberland, in 1802 and 1806, once to Weymouth, and in 1814 he made a tour in France and Belgium, but his chief subjects were almost exclusively local. He was perfectly satisfied with the lanes, heaths, and river-banks surrounding Norwich, without wishing to journey further afield. In his great tree picture, "The Poringland Oak," he rivalled his own idol Hobbema; in "Moon Rise on the Yare," he surpassed the moonlight paintings of Van der Neer, by whom it was inspired; while his masterpiece, "Mousehold Heath," at the National Gallery, will always rank Crome amongst the grandest of landscape painters. Asked by his son why he had painted this last subject, Crome made the memorable reply—"For air and space."

In addition to his oil-paintings Crome executed a few water-colours and also a number of etchings. In 1834 a series of thirty-one of his etchings was published under the title of "Norfolk Picturesque Scenery."

While out sketching in his fifty-third year he caught a chill, and after a few days' illness died on April 22, 1821. On the day before he died he addressed to his son the words so often quoted: "John, my boy, paint, but paint only for fame; and if your subject is only a pigsty, dignify it." The art of Old Crome is indeed a perpetual reminder that a masterpiece of painting is due far more to the treatment than to the subject, and nobody knew better than the Norwich master how to give dignity to the humblest subject by its stately presentation in a well-balanced composition.

Though his landscape art is limited in comparison with that of Turner and Constable, within his own self-imposed limits Crome is second to none. He did not set out, like Turner, to mirror the blazing glories of dawn and sunset, nor did he, like Constable, hold himself ready to paint nature and weather in every aspect: Crome waited for the quieter moods of nature in his own homeland, and he painted these to perfection.

§ 4

Cotman

The Norwich School owes its fame to two stars of the first magnitude, Crome and Cotman, and to a host of lesser luminaries. John Sell Cotman was fourteen years younger than Crome, and though also born at Norwich, on June 11, 1782, he did not, like Crome, acquire his art education in his native city. Cotman from the first was in a very different position. He was the son of a well-to-do draper, received a good education at the Norwich Grammar School, and was intended to enter his father's shop; but when his bent for art clearly declared itself his father was sensible enough to allow his son to make it his vocation and sent him to London.

Cotman remained in London from 1800 to 1806, and probably the most fruitful part of the education he received there was his association with the group of artists who frequented the house of Dr. Thomas Monro, who has already been mentioned in this OUTLINE as the friend of Turner and Girtin. In Dr. Monro's house at 8 Adelphi Terrace, Cotman made the acquaintance of and worked with all the most brilliant young artists of the day, and in addition to the studies he made there under these stimulating circumstances he joined a sketching club which Girtin had founded.

To Girtin, who was not only an inspiring genius but also a most generous and affectionate friend, Cotman probably owed most at this stage of his career, and it must have been a great shock to him when Girtin died at the early age of twenty-seven. After Girtin's death in November, 1802, London was not the same place to Cotman, and though as a young struggling artist he could hardly complain of want of success—for he had exhibited no fewer than thirty paintings at the Royal Academy between 1800 and 1806—he made up his mind to return to his native city.

In London Cotman had applied himself especially to architectural subjects, and it is possible that even in these early days he was influenced in this direction by the gifted West County artist, Samuel Prout (1783-1852), who excelled in water-colours of these subjects and was living in London from 1802 to 1804; but when he returned to Norwich in 1806 or 1807, Cotman at first set himself up as a portrait-painter. Gradually, however, under the influence of Crome—who was thirty-nine when Cotman was twenty-five—he devoted himself more and more to landscape. He became a member of the Norwich Society of Artists and was for a time its secretary.

Cotman was a prolific worker at this time, and to the society's exhibition in 1808 he contributed no fewer than sixty-seven works. In 1809 he married and soon afterwards removed to Yarmouth,

where he added to his means by teaching drawing as well as painting in oils and water-colours, and also etching. In 1811 he commenced a publication by subscription of his *Architectural Etchings,* and having made a number of topographical tours throughout the country, he published in 1816 his *Specimens of Norman and Gothic Architecture, Norfolk Churches,* etc. He formed a useful association with Dawson Turner, the Norfolk antiquary, for whose antiquarian publications Cotman drew and etched the illustrations, and during the next three years (1817-19) he made annual expeditions into Normandy with this writer, whose *Architectural Antiquities of Normandy,* illustrated by Cotman, was published in 1822. All the time that he was engaged on drawings for these and other publications, Cotman was exhibiting oil-paintings and water-colours both in Norwich and in London, but though several of these found purchasers the prices were so low that, notwithstanding his immense industry, Cotman could not have supported his wife and family if, in addition to all his other activities, he had not continued to give drawing lessons.

In 1825, when he was again living in Norwich, Cotman was elected an associate of the Water-colour Society in London, and from that year was a constant contributor to the society's exhibitions, but though his work was known and respected both in London and Norwich, the genius of Cotman was never recognised in his lifetime nor indeed for many years after his death. The struggle to make a living began to tell on his nerves and health, and it was in the hope of giving him some ease by assuring him a regular income that his steadfast friend Dawson Turner, the antiquary, succeeded in getting Cotman appointed in 1834 as drawing-master at King's College School, then in the Strand. Removing to London in view of this appointment, Cotman settled himself at 42 Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, but the change seemed to do him more harm than good. His health gradually declined, and the nervous depression to which

he was a victim became more and more severe till in the end his mind became slightly unhinged. His eldest son, Miles Edward Cotman (1811-58), a water-colourist of moderate ability, succeeded him as drawing-master at King's College School, and on July 28, 1842, John Sell Cotman died and was quietly buried in the churchyard of St. John's Wood Chapel, close to Lord's Cricket Ground. How little Cotman was appreciated then was made painfully evident when his remaining oil-paintings and water-colours were sold at Christie's in the following year. Works for which collectors would now gladly pay hundreds of pounds hardly realised as many shillings in 1843, and the highest price for a painting by him then obtained was £8 15*s.;* the highest price given for a Cotman water-colour was £6.

To discover exactly why an artist, afterwards recognised to be a genius, is not appreciated in his own lifetime, is never an easy task, but it is certain that many of his contemporaries considered Cotman's work to be "unfinished" because it had that vigorous breadth which now wins our admiration. Whether we look at an oil-painting like his "Wherries on the Yare" (see illustration facing page 282), or a masterly water-colour like the "Greta Bridge" (see illustration facing page 278), at the British Museum, we cannot fail to be impressed by the grandeur which the artist has given to his rendering of the scene by his subordination of detail and suppression of all that is irrelevant.

Cotman took a big view of nature, and the breadth and simplicity of his masses materially help to give his pictures, whether in oil or water-colour, a monumental majesty unsurpassed even by his great contemporaries.

XVII

THE PRE-RAPHAELITES

THE PRE-RAPHAELITES

THE ART OF FORD MADOX BROWN, ROSSETTI, HOLMAN HUNT, MILLAIS, AND BURNE-JONES

§ 1

AMONG the pupils of John Sell Cotman when he was a drawing-master at King's College School, was a strange foreign-looking boy, the son of an Italian poet and patriot living in exile in London. This boy was Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who afterwards combined with Millais and Holman Hunt to found the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Innumerable books have been written in which it has been sought to show that first one and then another of these three young men was the real motive-power in the founding of a new style of painting, but the fact remains that it was not till all three came together in 1848 that any revolution was effected, and it was the peculiar and diverse gifts which each brought to the common stock which made their union so formidable and enabled them eventually to triumph over opposition and hostile criticism.

Rossetti, according to Ruskin, was "the chief intellectual force" in the association; his fire, enthusiasm, and poetic feeling were valuable assets, but technically he was the least accomplished of the three. He had ideas, but at first he was weak in translating them into drawing and painting, and he shirked the drudgery of the discipline necessary to perfect his powers of expression. Millais, on the other hand, was not remarkable for original ideas, but he had brilliant powers of eye and hand; he

was a precocious genius in technique to whom the problems of drawing and painting presented no difficulty. Holman Hunt had neither the facility of Millais nor the impatience of Rossetti, but he had a high seriousness of purpose and a determined perseverance which held the others steadily together and chained their endeavours to lofty ideals.

Holman Hunt

Before considering what "Pre-Raphaelitism" was, and what it ultimately became, it will be helpful to glance briefly at the origin of its three founders. William Holman Hunt, the eldest of the trio, was born in Wood Street, Cheapside, on April 2, 1827. His father, the manager of a city warehouse, opposed his wish to be an artist and placed him at the age of twelve in the office of an estate agent. His employer encouraged young Hunt's artistic leanings, and the father reluctantly allowed the boy to spend his salary on lessons from a portrait-painter. In 1843 Hunt was at last allowed to devote himself to art, but entirely at his own risk, and the sixteen-year-old boy bravely struggled along, studying half the week at the British Museum and supporting himself by painting portraits on the other three days. Eventually he was admitted as a probationer to the Academy Schools, where he soon made friends with his junior, Millais, and while studying still managed to earn a bare living.

Millais

The youngest of the three was John Everett Millais, who was born at Southampton in 1829. He came from a Norman family settled in Jersey, and his early childhood was spent in that island, at Le Quaihouse, near St. Heliers. His father was a popular, gifted man with some artistic talent, who delighted in and encouraged the precocious ability his son soon showed in drawing. In 1837 his parents came to live in Gower Street, London, and on the advice of the Irish artist Sir Martin Archer Shee

Photo: Valentine.

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"THE LAST OF ENGLAND," BY FORD MADOX BROWN (1821–1893)

Birmingham Art Gallery.

Though an older artist, Madox Brown was influenced by the "Brotherhood," and this picture—which shows emigrants taking their last look at the "old country"—is "Pre-Raphaelite" in its exact rendering of details and in its serious thoughtfulness of expression.

Photo H. A. *Mansell & Co.*

"THE ANNUNCIATION" BY D. G. ROSSETTI (1828–1882)

Tate Gallery, London.

In this, his second attempt to paint a picture the poetic nature of the artist finds exquisite expression in his haunting conception of wistful meditative maidenhood His sister, Christina Rossetti, the poetess, posed for the figure of the Virgin.

(1769-1850), who was then President of the Royal Academy, young Millais was sent to Henry Sass's art school in Bloomsbury. Here his progress was so phenomenal that when he was only nine years old he won the silver medal of the Society of Arts. Two years later he was admitted to the Royal Academy Schools as the youngest student who ever worked there, and "The Child," as he was then called, was already considered to be a marvel of precocity whose achievements rivalled those of the youthful Lawrence.

When he was twelve years old he painted his first picture in oils, and in 1845, when he was sixteen, he was able to earn £100 a year by painting in backgrounds for a dealer and selling him some of his sketches. In the following year he exhibited "Pizarro seizing the Inca of Peru," a large painting of remarkable maturity now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, and in the next year, 1847, he was awarded a gold medal for his "Young Men of the Tribe of Benjamin seizing their Brides." In neither of these pictures do we perceive any tendency of the artist to revolutionise the style of painting then in vogue; both of them are more or less in the manner of William Etty (1787-1849), whose art, like that of Sir Joshua Reynolds, was chiefly based on the Venetian masters and whose colour was rich, but heavy and dark. At the Academy Schools Millais had already made the acquaintance of Holman Hunt, but though the two young students may have been discontented with the pictorial ideals of the time, and may have discussed aims and methods in private, they did not show any signs of a new faith in their works till after they had made the acquaintance of Rossetti.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

After leaving King's College School, Rossetti studied art at Cary's Academy in Bloomsbury, and though he was not able to gain admittance into the life-class, he worked in the antique School of the Royal Academy in 1845 and 1846. Born in Lon-

don in 1828, Dante Gabriel Rossetti was a year younger than Holman Hunt, and a year older than Millais, but though so near their own age, he was from an art-master's point of view far below them, so that he was kept drawing from casts of antique statues when they were already drawing and painting live human beings. This was dull work for Rossetti, who was passionately interested in life, and he looked around to see where he might obtain more congenial tuition. He had been greatly attracted by a picture he had seen in an exhibition, "Our Lady of Saturday Night," and he went to the painter, Ford Madox Brown, and besought him to accept him as a pupil. After some demur Brown consented, but when Rossetti, though allowed brushes and colours, found that his new master's method of tuition consisted in setting him to paint studies of still life, his impatience at discipline soon overcame him; and declaring that he was tired of painting "pots and pans," when his head was full of exciting pictures of romantic women and knightly men, he broke away from Brown after an apprenticeship that only lasted some four months.

Madox Brown
Cornelius and Overbeck

Ford Madox Brown (1821-93) was never a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, but he was so much in sympathy with their aims and his art was so nearly related to their own, that some brief account of him must be included in any review of this phase of English painting. Madox Brown was six years the senior of Holman Hunt. He was born in Calais at a time when David and the Classicists had imposed a new artistic ideal on France, and when he began to paint about 1835 this classical ideal was being attacked by a new romantic movement to which Madox Brown was attracted. He was from his childhood, therefore, conversant with Continental art movements—as the majority of English painters were not—and after studying at Bruges, Ghent, and Antwerp, where he was the pupil of the Bel-

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"GIRLHOOD OF THE VIRGIN," BY DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

Lady Jekyll's Collection.

The first picture ever painted by Rossetti, who under the guidance of Holman Hunt here shows an exactitude in the painting of details which he never surpassed later. The artist's mother sat for St. Anne and his sister Christina for the Virgin.

Reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Birmingham.

"THE BLIND GIRL," BY MILLAIS

Birmingham Art Gallery.

One of the last paintings in which Millais strictly adhered to the principles of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, this picture moves us equally by the pathetic tenderness of its subject and by the beautiful precision of its rendering of Nature.

gian historical and romantic painter, Baron Wappers, he worked for three years in Paris. His desire then was to become a painter of large historical pictures, and in 1844 he came to England in order to enter a competition for the commission to paint decorations for Westminster Hall. In this he was unsuccessful, and in the following year he went to Rome, where he became acquainted with two curious German painters named Cornelius and Overbeck. These artists were leading semi-monastic lives, and in so far as they deliberately cultivated the devotional frame of mind of the Italian masters who preceded Raphael, they were the first "Pre-Raphaelites." Cornelius and Overbeck, who were both devout Catholics, worked in cells, and like the mediæval monastic painters, they prepared themselves for their work by scourging, vigil, and fasting. In order that their work might be free from all taint of "fleshliness," they avoided the use of human models. It is not likely that their dry and rather affected painting influenced Madox Brown to any great extent, but they doubtlessly opened his eyes to the excellencies of the earlier Italian painters and showed him that there was more than one way of looking at nature.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that for the connoisseurs of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the "Old Masters" began where in the opinion of to-day they end. We look upon Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Leonardo da Vinci as the *end* of a great school of painters; but our forefathers were inclined to regard them as the *beginning* of a great school. Their successors, men like Annibale Carracci (1560-1609), Domenichino (1581-1641), and Carlo Maratti (1625-1713), were at one time esteemed as Masters, though to-day we recognise that their art was decadent and debased. Cornelius and Overbeck were perfectly right in preferring the painters before Raphael to those who followed him, but they made the deadly error of merely imitating the pictures of the Italian Primitives, instead of going, as they had done, direct to nature. Thus the German painters

made exactly the same mistake as the late Italian painters had done, and their art was sterile also for the same reason, because it was "soup of the soup," art based wholly on preceding art.

The effect of the early Christian painters on Ford Madox Brown was to cause him, not to imitate their work slavishly, but to look at nature for himself, as they did. When he did look he perceived that nature was far brighter than it appeared to be in the pictures of his British contemporaries. Since the time of Reynolds, Sir George Beaumont's dictum that a good picture must be a brown picture had been the general opinion, and though certain landscape-painters rebelled against this doctrine as we have seen, no English figure painters made any serious stand against it till Ford Madox Brown and the Pre-Raphaelites began to exhibit.

How had this cult in brown pictures arisen? The explanation is very simple. Painters had observed that the pictures by the recognised great masters, Rembrandt, Titian, Tintoretto, etc., were usually brown in tone, but this brownness was often due, not only to the pigments originally used by the masters, but also to the grime of centuries, to the "tone of time." Seeking to be praised as "Old Masters" in their own lifetime, painters used artificial means to make their pictures look brown, and were in the habit of painting on a brown bituminous ground in order to give to their pictures a fictitious quality of golden-brown light and "Rembrandtesque" shadow. Ford Madox Brown reversed the general practice of his day by painting his pictures on a white ground, and immediately his colour became brighter and truer to nature.

By the time he was back in England in 1846, Madox Brown had come independently to very much the same conclusions that Hunt and Millais were now whispering to one another, and he had begun to adopt a method of painting very similar to that subsequently practised by the Brotherhood, to whom we must now return.

§ 2

The Birth of the Brotherhood

Unknown to each other Rossetti and Holman Hunt both had a passion for the poetry of Keats, and it was this that first really brought them together. It was in 1848 that Rossetti persuaded Madox Brown to have him as a pupil, and to the Academy of that year Hunt had sent a painting inspired by a poem of Keats. In the memoirs which he wrote in his old age, Mr. Hunt gave an account of how he met the younger artist in a picture gallery and what ensued.

> Rossetti came up to me [he wrote] loudly declaring that my picture of "The Eve of St. Agnes" was the best in the collection. . . . Rossetti frankly proposed to me to come and see him. Before this I had been only on nodding terms with him in the schools, to which he came but rarely and irregularly. He had always attracted there a following of clamorous students who, like Millais's throng, were rewarded with original sketches. Rossetti's subjects were of a different class from Millais, not of newly culled facts, but of knights rescuing ladies. A few days more and Rossetti was in my studio.

The upshot of these meetings was that Rossetti left Madox Brown and shared a studio with Holman Hunt, under whose guidance he began painting his first picture, "The Girlhood of Mary Virgin" (see illustration facing page 296). Intimacy with Hunt naturally led to intimacy with his friend Millais, and it is said that the immediate occasion of the founding of the Brotherhood was an evening spent by the three friends in the house of Millais's parents looking at engravings of the early Italian wall-paintings in the Campo Santo at Pisa. According to Mr. Hunt it was Rossetti who insisted that their union should be a close one, and that it should be styled a "Brotherhood." The term "Pre-Raphaelite" originated as a nickname, somebody ex-

claiming when they had expressed a preference for the painters before Raphael to those who succeeded him, "Why, then you must be Pre-Raphaelites." The title was adopted as an official label which fitly conveyed their aims. These aims were to paint Nature with minute fidelity and to regain the intense sincerity of the early Italian painters, but undoubtedly Rossetti held that the latter also implied intense poetic expression.

Thus the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was established, and in addition to the three founders, membership was extended to Dante Gabriel's brother, W. M. Rossetti, and to three of their friends, Woolner, a sculptor, James Collinson, and F. G. Stephens. James Collinson was probably elected on the strength of his picture, "The Charity Boy's Début," in the Academy of 1847, and would doubtless have been a more important figure had he not ceased exhibiting after 1870 and retired to a monastery. His most important picture, "St. Elizabeth of Hungary," painted in 1851, is now in the Johannesburg Gallery. William Rossetti and Stephens soon abandoned painting; both became art critics, and their eloquent and enthusiastic articles did much to convert the public to an appreciation of the work of the other Brothers.

It is no unusual thing for art students or young artists to form themselves into clubs and societies, to hold regular meetings and to discuss their aims, methods, and ideals; but so often the talk leads to nothing. In the case of Millais and Hunt it led to a revolution of their painting; in the case of Rossetti it led to something approaching a masterpiece at the first effort. In 1848 Millais had exhibited "Cymon and Iphigenia," another painting in the style of Etty; in 1849 he exhibited "Lorenzo and Isabella," now at Liverpool, and but for the conclaves of the brethren and the stimulating encouragement of comradeship he could never in one year have leapt the gulf which separates the two pictures. Holman Hunt's "Rienzi" was an equally sensational advance on his "St. Agnes's Eve," but in many respects the most remarkable

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE BELOVED," BY D. G. ROSSETTI

Tate Gallery, London

"My beloved is mine and I am his." This poetical conception of the Bride in the Song of Solomon was commissioned by Mr. George Rae in 1863 and painted by Rossetti in 1865.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE DAY-DREAM," BY ROSSETTI

South Kensington Museum, London.

A beautiful example of Rossetti's third and last phase, during which his model and inspiration was the beautiful wife of his disciple William Morris.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"KING COPHETUA AND THE BEGGAR-MAID," BY SIR EDWARD BURNE-JONES (1833–1898)

Tate Gallery, London.

In this dream-like picture of the King about to lay his jewelled crown at the feet of the beggar-maid, we may trace the mediæval romanticism of Rossetti refined by the spirituality of a Celtic mystic.

achievement of all was Rossetti's "Girlhood of Mary Virgin." Finely painted as "Lorenzo and Isabella" is, it has not the touching simplicity of Rossetti's first painting, it is more imitative, a skilful exercise in the manner of the early Italian masters. It was immensely clever, but it was not quite what the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood set out to do.

Rossetti's maiden effort may appear childish in places when compared with the accomplishment of the Millais, but it is a much better example of true Pre-Raphaelitism in its absolutely honest and unconventional attempt to render what the painter saw. Mr. Hunt has told us that every detail in this picture was painted directly from life under his supervision, and it says much for his patient influence that in the first year of the Brotherhood its most romantic member should have painted the most naturalistic picture.

The trouble with Rossetti, owing to his teeming, poetic imagination, had been that he had always wanted to paint things "out of his head" at a time when his hand and eye needed to be educated by an endeavour to paint truly what was before him. With infinite tact Holman Hunt let him set to work on a romantic subject, the choice of his heart, but he took care that every detail in this imaginative scene should be painted truly and carefully from facts. In Madox Brown's studio Rossetti had rebelled at painting so prosaic an object as a pot; Holman Hunt led him to paint the same object with delight because it held the symbolical lily needed by his subject. For the first time in his life Rossetti became passionately interested in *things* because he had been made to see that they helped him to express his ideas. He borrowed big books from his father, and window curtains from his parents' house in Charlotte Street. His sister Christina sat for the Virgin, and his mother for St. Anne. He borrowed a child's nightgown and painted that on a small lay-figure, which probably explains why the figure of the little angel is not so convincing as the head; but when we remember that Rossetti was

painting every object in the picture for the very first time we are compelled to stop fault-finding to marvel at the wonder of his achievement.

"Rienzi" and "Lorenzo and Isabella" were exhibited in the Academy of 1849; "The Girlhood of Mary Virgin" in the Hyde Park Gallery known as the "Free Exhibition"; but somewhat to the disappointment of their authors they attracted very little public attention. Even the "P.R.B." after Rossetti's signature on his picture appears to have escaped comment. Undismayed, if a trifle disappointed, the young revolutionaries set about more vigorous propaganda by means of new pictures, and a periodical, *The Germ,* in which they could ventilate their opinions and doctrines.

It was with the idea of writing a journal for this magazine that during the summer Hunt and Rossetti made a tour in France and Belgium, and this journal was duly written, though later it was considered too personal to be published in *The Germ.* In their judgments of the pictures they saw abroad, the young artists were terribly severe. Van Eyck and the early Flemings they admired intensely, but the works of the later painters from Rembrandt to Rubens were dismissed in two words as "filthy slosh."

After what they had seen abroad they held more firmly than ever before that it was not enough for a picture to be correctly drawn and well painted, it must also enshrine a worthy idea. In accordance with this doctrine, now added to the rules of the Brotherhood, Hunt, Millais, and Rossetti all chose serious subjects for the pictures they intended to exhibit in 1850. Hunt painted "An Early Christian Missionary escaping from Druids," Millais his famous "Christ in the House of His Parents" (see illustration facing page 309), and Rossetti "The Annunciation" (see illustration facing page 295), or "Ecce Ancilla Domini" as it was originally called. Curiously enough Rossetti, who in the previous year had been the most, was now the least Pre-

Raphaelite of the three. His strangely beautiful work is not a vision of things seen, but a reverie, the romantic rendering of a mood. Again his sister Christina sat for the Virgin, and Thomas Woolner posed for the head of the Archangel.

Millais, on the other hand, had now thoroughly grasped the principle of Pre-Raphaelitism, and no longer giving a clever imitation of an Italian primitive, he outdid Hunt himself in the thoroughness with which each detail in his picture was studied from nature. In order to get absolute truth, Millais took his canvas to a carpenter's shop to paint the details; he painted the figure of Joseph from the carpenter because that was, he said, "the only way to get the development of the muscles right." He was not able to get sheep, but he purchased two sheep's heads from a butcher and painted the flock from them; and it will be observed that the sheep in the picture only show their heads, the bodies being tactfully concealed by wicker-work.

By the time the Academy of 1850 opened the existence and doctrines of the Brotherhood had become more widely known, and this year there was no opportunity to complain of any want of public attention. The three pictures aroused a storm of criticism which fell with particular fury on the head of Millais. The true meaning of "Pre-Raphaelite" was not very well understood, and the popular view was that a group of young painters had set themselves up to be "better than Raphael" and deserved to be trounced for their vanity and impudence. And trounced they were. "Their ambition," wrote one newspaper critic, "is an unhealthy thirst which seeks notoriety by means of mere conceit. Abruptness, singularity, uncouthness, are the counters by which they play the game."

The title "The Carpenter's Shop," by which Millais's picture is now generally known, was contemptuously applied to it by enemies of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. The artist originally exhibited it at the Academy with no other title than an extract from Zechariah (xiii. 6):

> And one shall say unto Him, What are these wounds in Thine hands? Then He shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends.

The very humanity which endears the picture to us to-day and makes it irresistibly winning was at that time a cause of offence. Millais was accused of dragging down the Saviour to "the lowest of human levels, to the level of craving human pity and assistance." The picture was described as "a pictorial blasphemy" from which right-minded people would "recoil with disgust and loathing." Even Charles Dickens took part in the general attack, and denounced the picture in *Household Words* as follows:

> In the foreground of the carpenter's shop is a hideous, wry-necked, blubbering red-haired boy in a nightgown, who appears to have received a poke in the hand from the stick of another boy with whom he had been playing in an adjacent gutter, and to be holding it up for the contemplation of a kneeling woman so horrible in her ugliness that (supposing it were possible for a human creature to exist for a moment with that dislocated throat) she would stand out from the rest of the company as a monster in the vilest cabaret in France, or the lowest gin-shop in England.

Since the famous novelist's abuse was directed far more at the persons than the painting, it is interesting to recall that the "blubbering boy" was little Noel Humphreys, the son of an architect, while the "monster horrible in ugliness" was Mrs. Henry Hodgkinson. Not one of the people in the picture was painted from a professional model, and though the body of St. Joseph is that of the carpenter the head is the portrait of the father of Millais.

This shower of vituperation affected the fortunes of the brethren, and Woolner, who had unsuccessfully competed for a commission to execute a Wordsworth Memorial, abandoned

"THE ORDER OF RELEASE, 1746," BY SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS

Tate Gallery, London.

This brilliant and pathetic painting of a Highlander, wounded in the '45 rebellion and unexpectedly delivered from prison, his wife having brought an order for his release, won for the artist his A.R.A. in 1853.

The woman is a portrait of Mrs. John Ruskin, who afterwards became Lady Millais.

sculpture for a time and set sail for the gold-diggings in Australia. There eventually he returned to sculpture, and in later years he had a modest success in Australia and England with his portrait busts. Holman Hunt, who could not lean on his parents as Millais and Rossetti could, had a desperate struggle with poverty, and was compelled to take on the job of washing and restoring the wall paintings by Rigaud (1659-1743) at Trinity House. Stephens was employed with Hunt on this work, and William Rossetti got a place in the Inland Revenue Office. Millais, though the most abused, was the best off of the band, for a dealer named Farrer had the courage to pay him £150 for his picture and showed his faith in the artist by pasting all the adverse criticism on the back of the canvas. Late in the year a purchaser was found also for the picture by Hunt, who then abandoned his restoration and set to work on his splendid picture "Two Gentlemen of Verona," now in the Birmingham Art Gallery. Millais at the same time began painting his "Woodman's Daughter," and in these pictures the artists obtained a greater brilliancy of colour than they had yet secured by painting upon a *wet* white ground. They prided themselves on having rediscovered one of the secrets of the early Italian masters, and later on Hunt communicated the "secret" to Madox Brown, whose pictures certainly gained much in luminosity and brightness of colour immediately after 1851.

Rossetti had begun an oil-painting of a subject from one of Browning's poems, but he did not get it finished, so that Millais and Hunt alone had to sustain the renewed attack which was made when their pictures were exhibited in the Academy of 1851. In addition to "The Woodman's Daughter," Millais exhibited "Mariana, or the Moated Grange" and "The Return of the Dove to the Ark," and again he and Hunt were told that their paintings were "offensive and absurd productions," displaying nothing but "puerility," "uppishness," and "morbid infatuation." This year, however, they were not without defenders. William Ros-

setti had begun his career as an art critic and upheld Pre-Raphaelite aims and ideals in the columns of the *Spectator.* Still more important were two letters of chivalrous and whole-hearted appreciation which appeared in *The Times* signed by "An Oxford Graduate," and everybody knew that the writer was the great John Ruskin. In the same year appeared a new volume of *Modern Painters,* in which Ruskin wrote of Millais and Holman Hunt:

> Their works are, in finish of drawing and splendour of colour, the best work in the Royal Academy, and I have great hope that they may become the foundation of a more earnest and able school of art than we have seen for centuries.

It is difficult to exaggerate the revulsion of feeling produced by Ruskin's pronouncements, for at that time he was almost a dictator of taste in England. Slowly the tide began to turn in favour of the brethren, but it was very nearly too late for Hunt. His picture returned to him unsold from the Academy, he was absolutely penniless and had nothing to tide him over until better times; indeed, he was on the point of abandoning painting and seeking his fortune as a sheep farmer in Australia when Millais and his parents came to the rescue. Millais had made a little money and, with his parents' consent, he gave it to his comrade in order that he might make one more attempt. This generous help bound the two "Brothers" still more closely together, and they spent the late summer and early autumn in the country near Surbiton, searching the backwaters of the Thames to find just the right background for the picture of "Ophelia" (see illustration facing page 308), which Millais had decided to paint, and studying the meadows for the scene of Hunt's crucial picture "The Hireling Shepherd" (see illustration facing page 281). But Hunt did not have to wait till this, perhaps his most perfect picture, was finished and exhibited before learning that the tide

was turning; for while he and Millais were painting in the fields a letter was brought them announcing that the Liverpool Academy had awarded a prize of £50 to the painter of "Two Gentlemen of Verona."

"The Hireling Shepherd" embodies the essence of Pre-Raphaelitism and indicates its high-water mark. In the heedless shepherd, who dallies with a coquettish beauty while a wolf is worrying his sheep, a worthy moral lesson is inculcated; while its bright, jewel-like colour reveals the minute fidelity with which nature has been painted. When it was shown in the Academy of 1852 the battle was nearly over, for though there was still considerable opposition the Pre-Raphaelite picture had now become an accepted type of painting, and other Academy exhibitors were beginning to change their practice and paint in a similar style.

The battle was won, but the Brotherhood was beginning to break up; Woolner was in Australia, Collinson thinking about retiring to a monastery, William Rossetti and Stephens had definitely become writers, and worse still, Dante Gabriel Rossetti was beginning to drift away. From 1850 to 1853 Rossetti produced no large picture, he was steeping himself in Dantesque literature and his mind was more occupied with poetry; now and again he produced some lovely little water-colours, Ruskin, who had become his principal patron, encouraging him in this direction with his purse as well as his praise. In 1853—the year in which he painted "The Order of Release" (see Colour-Plate)—Millais was elected A.R.A., and in the following year Holman Hunt, who had just painted and sold for £400 "The Light of the World," set sail for Palestine in order that he might be able to paint incidents from the life of Christ with literal truth to the nature of the country in which He lived. To the end Holman Hunt remained the most consistent of all to the principles of Pre-Raphaelitism.

For a little while after his departure the influence of Hol-

man Hunt lingered in England. "Autumn Leaves" and "The Blind Girl," both painted in 1855, are true Pre-Raphaelite pictures, and they were the last paintings by Millais that Ruskin blessed. But gradually, as he went on his way alone, Millais deteriorated, and though his work rapidly won public favour so that his career henceforward was, from a worldly point of view, one of uninterrupted success, his pictures ceased to be inspired by the noble seriousness of Holman Hunt or by the poetry of Rossetti. What had been sentiment degenerated into sentimentality, and as his subject-matter became commoner in quality, so an increasing laxity crept into his style of painting. "Bubbles," the child picture so extensively popularised as an advertisement by a firm of soap-makers, is the best-known example of his later style, but the achievements which come nearest to the distinction of his early work are some of his portraits, notably that of John Charles Montague, an ex-sergeant of the 16th Lancers, whom Millais painted in the uniform of "The Yeoman of the Guard." This picture was painted in 1876, and thirteen years earlier Millais had been elected R.A. In 1885 he was created a baronet, and in 1896, after the death of Lord Leighton, he was made President of the Royal Academy, but already his health was failing, and shortly after his election he died on August 13 of the same year, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral by the side of his mighty predecessor, Sir Joshua Reynolds.

§ 3

Meanwhile Rossetti had been treading another path, forsaking the naturalism of Holman Hunt, but avoiding the anecdotal triviality that tempted Millais; his pictures became more and more dream-like in their imaginative aloofness from life. The popularity that Millais courted was shunned by Rossetti, who, relying on the patronage of Ruskin and other admirers, ceased to exhibit his pictures except in his own studio.

Photo: W. A. Mansell.

"THE MILL," BY SIR E. BURNE-JONES

South Kensington Museum, London.

This vision of an imaginary world remote from actual life shows how Burne-Jones's ideal of womanhood differs from that of Rossetti, and how far removed are his pictorial ideals from the naturalism of Millais and Holman Hunt.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"OPHELIA," BY MILLAIS

Tate Gallery, London.

Painted on the Ewell, near Kingston, this picture is famous for the precise study of nature shown in the foreground and background. The figure was painted in his studio from Miss Siddal, who had to lie in a bath of water; one day Millais forgot to fill the lamps which kept the water warm, with the result that this beautiful and gifted woman, afterwards Mrs. Rossetti, contracted a serious illness which eventually shortened her life.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"CHRIST IN THE HOUSE OF HIS PARENTS," BY SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS (1829–1896)

Tate Gallery, London.

Dreadfully abused as "mean, odious, revolting, and repulsive" when it was first shown at the Academy in 1850—Charles Dickens joining in the attack—this picture is now generally considered to be the painter's noblest masterpiece. John Ruskin was the first great writer to praise it, and his eulogy turned the tide of public opinion.

"THE TRIUMPH OF THE INNOCENTS," BY W. HOLMAN HUNT

Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Rigidly faithful all his life to Pre-Raphaelite principles, Mr. Holman Hunt visited Palestine twice in order that he might be able to paint sacred subjects with literal truth to Syrian landscape. With poetic imagination the artist depicts the flight into Egypt as a royal progress in which "only the Child's eyes are open to see the children whose wakening souls are His retinue."

The Æsthetic Movement

In 1857 Rossetti went to Oxford with the intention of executing wall-paintings in the Debating Hall of the Union Society, and there he gathered round him a brilliant band of pupils, chief among whom were two undergraduates from Exeter College, William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones (1833-98). Unfortunately the English climate is fatal to true fresco painting, but though the Oxford decorations rapidly perished and to-day are hardly visible, they remain historic as marking the starting-point of a new phase of Pre-Raphaelitism, in which the naturalistic element was lost and its place taken by a more deliberately decorative and romantic mediævalism. Of this new school Rossetti was as definitely the leader and inspirer as Holman Hunt had been of the original Brotherhood, and though for many years the pictures produced by Rossetti and his followers continued to be commonly described as "Pre-Raphaelite," it is now clear that their productions really had little to do with the original Pre-Raphaelitism, but formed part of what became known later as the "Æsthetic Movement."

In 1862 Eleanor Siddal, who for ten years had been Rossetti's model and constant inspiration, died, and at first the bereaved husband was so prostrated with grief that he was totally unfitted for work. But two years later he recommenced painting in oils and reached the highest point in his "Lady Lilith" of 1864, and "The Beloved" (see illustration facing page 300), painted in 1865-6. Though nominally a subject from the Song of Solomon, this voluptuous presentation of feminine beauty, which for sheer loveliness rivals a Botticelli, is far removed from the simple and comparatively stern Biblical paintings of the artist's youth. The subject is clothed in the garb of mediævalism, enveloped in the romance of a fairy-tale, and heightened by a brilliance of colour unsurpassed in the painter's work.

Rossetti's pictorial work may be divided into three periods, each of which is dominated by an ideal of womanhood derived

from a living woman; in the first period she is his sister Christina, in the second his wife Eleanor Siddal, and the inspiration of the third was Mrs. William Morris. Of the many pictures she inspired one of the most beautiful is "The Daydream" (see illustration facing page 301) in the Ionides Collection at South Kensington, but though he painted her in many characters, he never painted Mrs. Morris as Dante's Beatrice. That character was sacred to his wife, and it was in memory of her that he began to paint in 1863—though it was not finished till much later—the "Beata Beatrix" now in the Tate Gallery. The picture, according to Rossetti, "is not intended at all to represent death, but to render it under the semblance of a trance, in which Beatrice, seated at a balcony overlooking the city [Florence], is suddenly rapt from earth to heaven."

Burne-Jones

Rossetti died at Birchington in 1882, but his ideals were faithfully carried on by the most celebrated of his pupils, Edward Burne-Jones, who had been intended for the Church, but after meeting Rossetti at Oxford felt he must be a painter. One great difference between their pictures lay in their different ideals of womanhood, for while the women of Rossetti were full-blooded and passionate, those of Burne-Jones were of so refined a spirituality that to many people they appear anæmic. Otherwise the paintings of Burne-Jones are as remote from naturalism as the later works of Rossetti; he also gives us dream pictures of an imaginary mediævalism, and while Rossetti, as became his Italian descent, found his ideal in the Florence of Dante's time, the Welshman Burne-Jones fittingly found his in the legendary court of King Arthur. Both, however, were inspired by the same feeling for chivalry and romance, and the distance that had been travelled from Holman Hunt's naturalism may be traced in the famous confession of Burne-Jones that he longed to paint "the light that never was on sea or land."

In 1884 he exhibited one of his best-known and most popular works, "King Cophetua and the Beggar-maid" (see illustration facing page 301), at the Grosvenor Gallery, and two years later, at the age of fifty-three, he was tardily elected A.R.A., but he was never much in sympathy with the Academy, seldom exhibited there, and in 1893, five years before he died, he resigned his associateship.

William Morris

In addition to his pictures and water-colours, Burne-Jones designed a number of tapestries and stained-glass windows for his lifelong friend William Morris, whose unbounded artistic energy found more congenial occupation in reviving crafts than in practising painting. In Morris the mediævalism of Rossetti found a furiously eager and thorough-going exponent, and though many of his ideas were unpractical, his inauguration of the Arts and Crafts Society was one of the most fruitful art movements of the Victorian Era, and to him more than to any other man we owe not only the revival of tapestry and stained glass but a great improvement in fine printing, in furniture, pottery, wall-papers, and interior decoration generally.

Holman Hunt, the eldest of the Pre-Raphaelites, survived them all, and after painting a series of sacred pictures unique in English art for their religious fervour and geographical exactitude, he died in September, 1910, at the great age of eighty-three.

XVIII

THE VICTORIAN AGE

THE VICTORIAN AGE

THE ART OF LANDSEER, LEIGHTON, POYNTER, ALFRED STEVENS, ALBERT MOORE, ORCHARDSON, AND G. F. WATTS

§ 1

SEVERAL of the artists already mentioned in this OUTLINE—among them being Turner, Cotman, and David Cox—were alive and working when Queen Victoria ascended the throne in 1837, but we are not in the habit of thinking of any of these as typical artists of the Victorian Era. Even the Pre-Raphaelites, whose art, as described in the last chapter, shed so much lustre on the Queen's long reign, were a group apart from the general trend of the times, and none of these painters—with the one exception of Millais in his later years—showed in his art those peculiar characteristics which we are now inclined to label broadly as "Victorian."

Just as in politics the reign of Victoria was distinguished, before all things, by the Growth of Democracy, so painting during this reign approached more closely than it had ever done before to popular ideals. Under Queen Victoria English painting became a homely, easily understandable art, appealing to the People by clear representation of simple themes often founded on everyday life and almost always tinged by a sentiment perceptible and congenial to the humblest intelligence. Subject was of paramount importance, every picture told a story, and the story was usually of a simple nature that required no erudition for its comprehension, one that all who ran could read.

Of a host of pictures of this description only a few can be mentioned here. The quintessence of Victorianism may be found in the paintings of William Powell Frith (1819-1909), whose "Derby Day," now in the Tate Gallery, created a sensation in 1858, and whose "Railway Station," painted four years later, is a still more dramatic assemblage of the "all sorts and conditions of men" who go to make the world. No knowledge of the old masters or of the technique of painting is needed to enjoy Frith's "Railway Station"; everybody can recognise the bridal couple being "seen off" by their friends, the boy who is going to school, the new recruit taking leave of his parents, and the criminal who is being arrested at the moment when he thought to escape. This picture is not only full of the incidents which may be seen at any railway station; it is full of the simple human emotions which all have experienced and all can understand.

Landseer

Very much the same qualities—though the subjects are entirely different—can be found in the works of Sir Edwin Landseer, R.A. (1802-1873), who was reputed to have been Queen Victoria's favourite painter, and was certainly one of the most popular and most successful painters of his day. Edwin Henry Landseer was born in London and was one of a family of artists. He was the third son of John Landseer, A.R.A., a painter and engraver; his brother Charles Landseer (1799-1879) also became a successful painter of historical and animal pictures; and his eldest brother, Thomas Landseer, became an expert engraver, whose prints after his brother's pictures materially contributed to the widespread fame and popularity which Edwin Landseer enjoyed. Animals specially appealed to the young artist, and some of his earliest studies were made in a menagerie at Exeter Exchange, where the Strand Palace Hotel now stands. The first distinction he received was a premium from the Society of Arts for his drawing of "A Horse for Hunt-

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"DIGNITY AND IMPUDENCE," BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A. (1802–73)

Tate Gallery, London.

Landseer, who was Queen Victoria's favourite painter, is the most famous interpreter in art of canine intelligence and fidelity. In this, the most popular of his pictures, the artist humorously contrasts the stateliness of the bloodhound with the "cheekiness" of a little Scotch terrier.

Photo: Mansell & Co. *Reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool.*

"FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH," BY SIR E. J. POYNTER, P.R.A. (1836–1919)

Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

This inspiring picture of a Roman sentinel, steadfastly remaining at his post amid the scenes of terror which accompanied the destruction of Pompeii by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, is generally regarded as the masterpiece of one of the most eminent of the Victorian classical painters.

ing," and at the age of fourteen he was admitted as a student to the schools of the Royal Academy, where he had already made his début as an exhibitor with a painting of "The Heads of a Poynter and Puppy."

Up to about 1820 his subjects had chiefly been dogs and horses, but he soon added other animals to his repertory. Among his father's friends was the historical painter Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786-1846), and on the advice of this artist Landseer, while still an Academy student, learnt to dissect and make anatomical studies of animals. Taking advantage of the death of a lion in one of the menageries, he diligently studied its anatomy, and the knowledge thus gained gave him a power in the drawing of that animal notable in his future works. The first-fruits of these studies were his pictures "A Prowling Lion" in the Academy of 1821 and "A Lion Disturbed" in the following year. In 1824 he exhibited "The Cat's Paw," a picture of a monkey seizing a cat's paw to take roasting chestnuts from a fire, this being one of the first of his animal paintings in which an obvious moral was happily combined with humour.

In this year, when Landseer was twenty-two, he accompanied his friend and fellow-student C. R. Leslie (1794-1859) on a visit to Scotland, where the two young artists had the honour of staying with Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford. Landseer drew the dogs of the author of *Waverley,* and was introduced by the novelist to the deer forests of Scotland. Henceforward the "monarch of the glen" became one of Landseer's favourite subjects, and deerstalking was the sport which he loved beyond all others; but it is said that the sportsman was often vanquished by the artist, and that when a particularly noble animal came in sight, Landseer was apt to fling down his rifle and pick up instead his sketch-book and pencil.

In 1826 he was elected A.R.A., and his prosperity being now assured he left his father's house and established himself at 1 St. John's Wood Road, where he lived unmarried till the

day of his death. Landseer now widened the field of his art and painted pictures of various subjects, among them being several portraits. One of the most successful of the last was "Lord Cosmo Russell," a picture of a little boy on a rough pony scampering over the heather; but while he never lacked patrons even for portraiture, his fame and popularity depended chiefly on his animal pictures and particularly on his paintings of dogs. A witty canon of St. Paul's, who was advised to have his portrait painted by Landseer, laughingly declined with the remark, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?"

In 1834 he exhibited at the Royal Academy "Bolton Abbey in the Olden Time," one of the best-known and most popular of all his works, which has been made familiar throughout Great Britain not only by engravings but also by innumerable copies in needlework. In 1837 he increased his already great reputation by his picture of a faithful dog watching beside a coffin, entitled "The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner," a work of intense pathos, and in the following year he painted a noble Newfoundland dog as "A Distinguished Member of the Humane Society." No painter ever surpassed Landseer in rendering all the varied aspects of canine character, and while in some of his pictures he attained a sublimity of pathos so that some captious critics accused him of making his dogs "too human," in others he showed a subtle humour which is irresistible. Probably no English picture has ever enjoyed a wider popularity than "Dignity and Impudence" (see illustration facing page 316), in which Landseer amusingly contrasts an old bloodhound of the Duke of Grafton breed with a little Scotch terrier called "Scratch." Landseer loved dogs and kept a troop of them in his home at St. John's Wood.

From 1839 onwards the artist enjoyed a considerable intimacy with the Royal Family. He taught both Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort to etch and painted many pictures for them, one of his largest being "The Drive, Shooting Deer on the

Photo: Henry Dixon & Son. *Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Thos. Agnew & Sons.*

"SYMPATHY," BY BRITON RIVIÈRE (1840–1920)

This favourite picture of a little girl in disgrace and her canine comforter never fails to appeal to all who love children and dogs and have remarked the unspoken sympathy which exists between them.

Photo: Frederick Hollyer.

"LOVE AND LIFE," BY G. F. WATTS (1817–1904)

Tate Gallery, London.

Love, strong in immortal youth, guides Life upwards over a rocky path, sheltering her with his broad wings from stormy winds. Even in this barren soil violets spring up where Love has trod.

An exquisite allegory by the most thoughtful of Victorian painters.

Pass." He had been elected R.A. in 1831 and in 1850 he was knighted. He was a sculptor as well as a painter, and in 1859 he was commissioned to execute the lions for the base of Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square. On this work the artist was engaged, off and on, for some half-a-dozen years, and his Lions were finally uncovered at Trafalgar Square in 1869. Two of the studies which Landseer made at the Zoo for these lions are now in the National Gallery (Nos. 1349 and 1350).

Three years earlier, on the death of Sir Charles Eastlake (1793-1865), Landseer had been offered the Presidency of the Royal Academy, but he declined the honour, for though a general favourite, popular alike at Court, in society, and with the public, he was subject to fits of depression brought about by an almost morbid sensitiveness and a certain constitutional delicacy. Towards the end of his life he suffered continually from nerves, and his general state of health was sadly impaired by a railway accident in November, 1868. This accident not only left a scar on his forehead but affected his memory, so that his last years were much clouded. He died in his house in St. John's Wood on October 1, 1873, and was buried in state at St. Paul's Cathedral.

The tradition of painting animals with affectionate insight, founded by Landseer, has been followed with success by many other British artists, prominent among them being Briton Rivière (1840-1920), who, after being influenced at first by the pictures of the Pre-Raphaelites and by Tennyson's poetry, soon turned his attention to the painting of pictures in which animals played an important part. His well-known "Sympathy" (see illustration facing page 318), in the Tate Gallery, is a characteristic Victorian picture in the Landseer tradition, but in gayer and more agreeable colours. It tells its own story clearly, and can never fail to appeal to all who love children and dogs and have noted the unspoken sympathy which exists between them.

§ 2

Lord Leighton

Victorian painting was essentially a story-telling art, but the stories were not limited to one country or to one century. The classical revival, the delight in pictures representing the life of ancient Greece and Rome, which marked, as we have seen, the art of France during the Revolutionary Period, did not show itself in England till nearly half-a-century later. The man who introduced this style of picture into England was Frederick Leighton, who, though born at Scarborough in 1830, spent the greater part of his early life abroad. Leighton was the son of a physician and spent his boyhood in Italy. When he was only ten years old he studied drawing at Rome, and afterwards lived in Florence, where he was taught by several Italian artists. When he was eighteen he visited Brussels, and in the following year he continued his art studies in Paris, where he attended a life-school and copied pictures by Titian and Correggio in the Louvre. In 1850 he went to Germany, visiting Dresden and Berlin, but staying longest at Frankfort, where he worked for two years under a painter named Steinle and was to some extent influenced by the painters Cornelius and Overbeck, who were mentioned in the last chapter. From Germany he returned to Paris, where he had a studio in the Rue Pigalle. At this time he was much enamoured of the earliest Italian artists, and his first oil-painting, executed at Frankfort, represented "Giotto found by Cimabue among the Sheep." It was from Paris that Leighton sent to the Academy of 1855 his picture of "Cimabue's Madonna carried in Procession through the streets of Florence." This picture, with its precise drawing, elaborate design, and fresh, clear colour, created a tremendous sensation in London, and when it was bought by Queen Victoria the reputation of the painter was immediately made. It was not till five years later, however, that Leighton left Paris and settled in London.

Photo. Fredk. Hollyer.

"HOPE," BY G. F. WATTS

Tate Gallery, London.

Blindfolded, with lyre in hand, and sitting on the globe in the dim twilight of the world, Hope "strives to get all the music possible out of the last remaining string."

This beautiful allegory is the masterpiece of an artist who sought in all his works to "appeal to the imagination and the heart, and kindle all that is best and noblest in humanity."

Leighton was now thirty years old, and he was an accomplished, much-travelled man of the world. He had charming, courtly manners, and his prestige in the arts was equalled by his social success. He executed a number of illustrations for the Brothers Dalziel, but he had no lack of other patrons and received numerous commissions for decorative paintings and subject pictures. He gave himself largely to the illustration of Greek history and legend, two of his most famous pictures in this style being "Daphnephoria" and "The Return of Persephone," now in the Leeds Art Gallery. He was generally considered to have recaptured the spirit of Greek art better than any artist since Raphael, and "The Bath of Psyche" (see illustration facing page 328) is a famous example of the almost waxen perfection of his figures, and of his manner of idealising the nude.

The graceful sense of form noticeable in his paintings was also displayed in Leighton's works of sculpture, of which the best known are "The Sluggard" and "Athlete with Python," both in the Tate Gallery. From the moment he set foot in England, Leighton's career was a series of unbroken successes. He was elected A.R.A. in 1864, R.A. in 1868, and ten years later, after the death of Sir Francis Grant in 1878, he was elected President of the Royal Academy and received a knighthood. He was created a baronet in 1886, and on January 1, 1896, a few months before his death, he was made Baron Leighton of Stretton, being the first British painter elevated to the peerage.

Leighton never married. He built himself a handsome house, with an Arab Hall, from his own design at No. 2 Holland Park Road, and his home, now known as Leighton House, is preserved as a memorial of his art.

Looking backward we may surmise that the wide popularity enjoyed by Leighton and his followers was not altogether unrelated to the revival of interest in antiquity and archæology

which, beginning in the reign of Queen Victoria, has continued undiminished to this day. At a time when the mind of the public was roused by reports in the newspapers of the discoveries made by excavators in Greece, Egypt, and elsewhere, it is not surprising that visitors to the Academy should have made favourites of those pictures which sought to portray life as it was in Greece or Egypt in the olden days.

Sir E. J. Poynter

Among a number of scholarly artists who were influenced by the example of Leighton, one of the most distinguished was his eventual successor in the presidency of the Royal Academy, Sir Edward John Poynter (1836-1919). This artist was born in Paris and was the son of an architect, Ambrose Poynter, who was himself a skilful painter in water-colours and had been an intimate friend of R. P. Bonington. E. J. Poynter studied art first in the Academy schools and afterwards in Paris, where one of his most intimate friends and fellow-students was the illustrator George du Maurier, author of *Trilby*. Poynter first exhibited at the Academy in 1861, and during the earlier part of his life he designed a number of decorative works, among them being mosaics for the Houses of Parliament and for St. Paul's Cathedral. He also, like Leighton, executed illustrations—some of which appeared in *Once-a-Week*—and painted portraits as well as landscapes, but though his activities were many and various, he was best known by his paintings of Greek, Roman, and Egyptian subjects. His first great popular success, and probably the most moving picture he ever conceived, was painted in 1865; "Faithful unto Death" (see illustration facing page 317), now in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, shows a Roman soldier standing unmoved at his post while Pompeii is being destroyed by earthquake and volcanic eruption, and in this picture the artist not only shows exactitude in archæological detail, but also expresses a nobility of purpose which every human being can under-

Photo: Frederick Hollyer.

"MAMMON," BY G. F. WATTS

Tate Gallery, London.

A powerful indictment of ruthlessness in the pursuit of wealth. The artist shows us the god of riches with ass's ears, in gold brocade and crown, seated on a blood-red throne surmounted by skulls, with money bags in his lap. With heavy hand he crushes the head of Woman, whose green garment (symbolic of hope) has fallen from her, while Man is stripped and prostrate beneath his foot.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

MRS. MARY ANN COLLMANN, BY ALFRED STEVENS (1817–75)

National Gallery, London.

Painter, sculptor, and architect, Alfred Stevens recalled the universality which distinguished the giants of the Renaissance. Towards the end of his life he was entrusted with the execution of the Wellington Monument for St. Paul's Cathedral, but for many years his genius was frittered away by his being compelled to earn his living by designing minor objects for architects and commercial firms. This noble portrait of the wife of an architect who employed him at one time, shows the regal dignity and perfection of his painting.

stand and admire. In 1867 he painted "Israel in Egypt," but in later years he seldom approached the high seriousness of these early pictures, and though he maintained his popularity with scholarly and agreeable renderings of classical scenes, like "A visit to Æsculapius" in the Tate Gallery, the subjects of these pictures tended to become lighter and sometimes trivial.

In addition to his work as a painter Sir E. J. Poynter was overwhelmed by official duties. He was elected A.R.A. in 1869 and two years later he was appointed the first Slade Professor at University College, London, a post which he held till 1875, when he became Director of the Royal College of Art at South Kensington, over which he presided for seven years. Meanwhile he had in 1876 been elected R.A., and henceforward his influence in the Academy council steadily increased. In 1894 he was appointed Director of the National Gallery, London, and he held this post till 1905, although in 1896 he had been appointed President of the Royal Academy, in succession to Millais. He was knighted in 1896 and made a baronet in 1902.

Alma-Tadema

The wealth of Victorian England not only fostered native art, but naturally drew to these shores a number of foreign artists. Among them was one of the most famous of our modern classical painters, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema. This artist was born in Holland in 1836, and after studying art in Antwerp gave his attention to historical painting. He began with early French and Egyptian subjects, but commenced his series of Greek subjects about 1865. In 1869 he sent his painting "The Pyrrhic Dance" to the Academy in London, where it was so well received that the painter decided to settle in England and became naturalised in 1873.

In the hands of Alma-Tadema the classical picture became historical in detail but playful and fanciful in subject. The Victorian anecdote reappeared in a Greek or Roman dress, as in

his picture "A Silent Greeting" at the Tate Gallery, in which a Roman warrior places a bunch of roses in the lap of a sleeping lady. "Love in Idleness" (see illustration facing page 325) is a characteristic example of his art and shows the wonderfully painted marble accessories which he was so fond of introducing into his pictures. Though full himself of antiquarian knowledge, and often called upon by Irving and other theatrical producers to assist in giving verisimilitude to the costumes and scenery for historical plays, Alma-Tadema never wearied the public with his learning, and his pictures were in the nature of agreeable dreams which made no serious demands upon the intellect or high emotions of the spectator. In the course of a long and successful career Alma-Tadema was elected A.R.A. in 1876, R.A. in 1879, knighted in 1899, and received the Order of Merit in 1905. He died while staying at Wiesbaden in 1912.

Albert Moore

While all these artists enjoyed fame and fortune in their lifetime, other artists of equal or superior gifts were less appreciated by their contemporaries, though in several cases their fame is higher to-day than that of the popular favourites of their day. If we number Albert Moore (1841-1893) among the Victorian classical painters, we must be careful to draw a distinction between his art and that of Leighton, Poynter, and Alma-Tadema. For, whereas these three artists emphasised the illustrative element in painting, Albert Moore laid more stress on its decorative element. Moore was not anecdotal, and for this reason his decorative compositions did not make so easy and obvious an appeal to his contemporaries, but he was filled with the Greek spirit of beauty, and his painting "Blossoms" (see illustration facing page 328) is now one of the most admired of the quasi-classical pictures in the Tate Gallery. Moore was born at York and was the son of an artist, but though he was trained in the Academy schools and began to exhibit at the Academy in the sixties, he

Photo: T. & R. Annan.

"THE TENDER CHORD," BY SIR W. Q. ORCHARDSON, R.A. (1835–1910)

This engaging picture of a Victorian young lady, arrested by some memory evoked by "the tender chord," is a typical example of the domestic art of this distinguished Scottish painter, who retained the respect of his brother artists by his polished powers of painting and design, and won the affection of the public by his power to suggest a story and convey a sentiment.

Photo: B.P.C.

"LOVE IN IDLENESS," BY SIR LAWRENCE ALMA-TADEMA, R.A. (1836–1912)

Among the classical painters of his time, Alma-Tadema, who was born in Holland, won wide popularity by illustrating the lighter side of life in ancient Greece and Rome. This dream-like picture of wistful maidenhood is a characteristic example of his art, and exhibits the scrupulously-painted marble accessories which this artist delighted to introduce into his pictures.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"NAPOLEON ON BOARD THE 'BELLEROPHON,'" BY W. Q. ORCHARDSON, R.A.

Tate Gallery, London.

A dramatic, thought-provoking vision of the deposed Emperor on his way to St. Helena. The officers of his staff, from left to right, are Col. Planat, General Montholon, Surgeon Maingaut, Count Las Cases, Generals Savary, Lallemand, and Bertrand. The boy Las Cases leans upon the rail.

was not well received there and subsequently exhibited chiefly at the Grosvenor Gallery and the Old Water-colour Society. He was never elected a member of the Academy, but associated with Whistler and other independent artists. An admirable draughtsman and designer, Albert Moore was also gifted with a refined and delicate sense of colour equalled by few of his contemporaries.

His brother Henry Moore (1831-95), an excellent marine painter, received more official recognition; he was elected A.R.A. in 1886, R.A. in 1893, and in 1885 his "Catspaws off the Land," in the Tate Gallery, was bought for the nation.

§ 3

Alfred Stevens

Apart from all the other artists of his time stands the lonely figure of Alfred Stevens (1817-75), who though never fully appreciated by his own contemporaries, is now generally recognised to have been probably the greatest and most complete artist that England ever produced. Stevens was cast in a heroic mould and ought to have lived in a heroic age; painter, sculptor, and architect, he possessed the universality of some giant of the Renaissance; and no other artist of any country has approached more closely in his work to the temper of Michael Angelo. Yet this great Englishman was never recognised or honoured by the Royal Academy, throughout his life he had a hard struggle to make a living, and while his Wellington Monument and Prophets for St. Paul's Cathedral prove that he was capable of executing works of the mightiest genius both in painting and in sculpture, for want of more appropriate employment Stevens was condemned to spend a great part of his life in designing stoves, fenders, etc., for commercial firms.

Alfred Stevens was born at Blandford in Dorset in 1817. He was the son of an heraldic painter, whom he assisted from an early age, and while he was still in his 'teens his rare genius was recognised by some of the better-off residents in the district,

who subscribed a purse to enable him to study art in Italy. Thus assisted, Stevens went to Italy in 1833, and stayed there for nearly nine years, studying painting, sculpture, and architecture, chiefly in Florence and Rome. In the latter city he was for two years (1841-2) assistant to the Danish sculptor Thorwaldsen (1770-1844), author of the famous Lion of Lucerne, carved in the solid rock in memory of the Swiss guards who died in defense of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette.

When Alfred Stevens returned to England in 1842 he was, according to modern authorities, "the most thoroughly educated artist the country has seen," but his erudition and genius long failed to find suitable employment. In 1844 he competed, unsuccessfully, for a commission to execute decorations in Westminster Hall, and in the following year he accepted an appointment as Master of Architectural Drawing, Perspective, Modelling, and Ornamental Painting to a new School of Design at Somerset House. To Stevens, however, teaching was never more than a stopgap; he knew that his real business in life was to create works of art, and consequently as soon as he was given an opportunity to do creative work he resigned his appointment and in 1847 he began to decorate Deysbrook, near Liverpool. For the next few years he managed to make a living by working for other architects; in 1849 and 1854 he worked for Cockerell on St. George's Hall, Liverpool; he designed the bronze doors for Pennethorn's Geological Museum in Jermyn Street; he designed the lions for the British Museum railings in 1852; but work of this kind was so uncertain that in 1850 he had been glad to accept a position as designer in the firm of Hoole at Sheffield. Thanks to Alfred Stevens this firm secured first prize for their stoves and fenders in the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Occasionally he received a commission for a painting, and his noble portrait of Mrs. Mary Ann Collmann (see illustration facing page 323, at the National Gallery, was painted in 1854,

the lady being the wife of an architect, Leonard Collmann, who sometimes employed Stevens.

In 1856 Stevens began the chief work of his life with his competition model for the Wellington Monument. Originally he was placed only sixth in the competition and awarded a prize of £100, but fortunately on further consideration the superior merit and appropriateness of his design was perceived and the commission for the monument was definitely given to Stevens. For the remaining seventeen years of his life the artist was at work on this monument, which was all but completed at his death, with the exception of the crowning equestrian statue of the Duke, which by a strange caprice was ruled out by the Dean because he did not like the idea of a horse in a church! Eventually this pedantic objection was overruled, and the equestrian statue, carried out from Stevens's model, was placed in position as recently as 1911, so that the whole monument as conceived by Stevens may now be seen in St. Paul's. Other memorials of the genius of Stevens in St. Paul's are the four mosaics of Prophets in the spandrels under the dome, which he designed in 1862. The original cartoon for the mosaic of "Isaiah" is now in the Tate Gallery, and nothing equal to it can be found nearer than the Sistine Chapel at Rome. Concurrently with these great masterpieces, Stevens worked at the decoration of Dorchester House, Park Lane, where he completed for Mr. Holford two chimney-pieces, a buffet, and other features, and designed a painted ceiling, the whole being a scheme of unequalled splendour in English interior decoration. Worn out by the strain of his monument and his severe battle with life, Alfred Stevens died on May 1, 1875, in the house he had designed and built for himself at 9 Eaton Villas, Haverstock Hill. Apart from the works already mentioned, only a few fragments remain of the art of Alfred Stevens, but while we must always deplore that more opportunities were not given to so great and various an artist, enough exists to prove to all time the measure of his genius.

§ 4

G. F. Watts

In the same year as Stevens, namely 1817, there was born in London another great artist, who though he certainly gained honours and rewards during his lifetime, nevertheless found himself hampered by the circumstances of his time in carrying out the desires of his art. George Frederick Watts was born in London on February 23, 1817, the son of a Welsh father who encouraged his artistic bent and permitted him to study at the Academy schools and also under the sculptor William Behnes (1795-1864). When he was twenty-five Watts entered the competition for the best designs for decorating in fresco the new House of Lords, and won the first prize of £300 with his "Caractacus led Captive through the Streets of Rome." This was the competition in which both Alfred Stevens and Ford Madox Brown were unsuccessful. On the strength of this prize Watts in 1843 went to Italy, where he remained for four years, mostly in Florence, and was befriended by Lord Holland. Returning to England, Watts entered another competition in 1847 for decorating the House of Lords, this time in oils, and again won the first prize of £500 with his "Alfred inciting the Saxons to resist the Danes." As a result of these successes Watts was employed for the next ten years on mural decorations, painting "St. George overcoming the Dragon" for the House of Lords and his allegory of "Justice" for the great hall of Lincoln's Inn; but though his desire was to continue painting in this style, further opportunities were denied him. He offered to give his time freely in painting decorations for Euston railway station, but the offer was declined, and balked of his intention to create elevating works of art in public buildings, he began that great series of painted allegories with which his name is most closely associated.

Explaining his own ideals Watts once said: "My intention has not been so much to paint pictures that charm the eye, as to

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"BLOSSOMS," BY ALBERT MOORE (1841–93)

Tate Gallery, London.

This picture of a woman standing before a mass of blossoms is one of the outstanding masterpieces of Victorian painting.

Albert Moore was pre-eminent as a decorative artist.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE BATH OF PSYCHE," BY LORD LEIGHTON, P.R.A. (1830–96)

Tate Gallery, London.

Lord Leighton, the first painter to be elevated to the peerage, was the leader of the classical revival which marked one phase of Victorian painting. His love of Greek art and refined imagination may be seen in this idealised picture.

suggest great thoughts that will appeal to the imagination and the heart, and kindle all that is best and noblest in humanity." Successful in his early years and never covetous of great wealth, Watts was able in his middle years to paint exactly as he pleased without thinking of sales and patrons. He painted portraits, but he never painted any person he did not respect and admire, and the noble series of portraits of the great men of his time which he gave to the National Portrait Gallery shows how little, even in portraiture, did Watts paint for money. Similarly the pick of his allegorical paintings, a cycle of the history of humanity, was kept for years in his own gallery at Little Holland House, till in 1897 he generously presented the collection to the Tate Gallery. Watts was essentially a philosophical artist and he has not inaccurately been described as "a preacher in paint," for, in his opinion, it was not enough for an artist to portray noble aspirations, he must also "condemn in the most trenchant manner prevalent vices," and utter "warning in deep tones against lapses from morals and duties." All aspects of Watts's art may be seen to advantage in the room devoted to his works at the Tate Gallery, where his beautiful "Hope" (see Colour-Plate) and his "Love and Life" (see illustration facing page 319) reveal noble aspirations of humanity, while his unforgettable "Mammon" (see illustration facing page 322) and "The Minotaur" condemn prevalent vices and warn against lapses from morals.

As a sculptor Watts is represented at the Tate Gallery by his bronze bust of "Clytie," but his most important work in this medium is his equestrian group "Physical Energy," originally designed as a monument to Cecil Rhodes and set up over the empire-builder's grave on the Matoppo Hills, South Africa. A replica of this fine statue has been placed in Kensington Gardens.

The life of Watts was long and full of honours. He was elected A.R.A. and R.A. in the same year, 1867; twice he was offered and refused a baronetcy, but two years before his death

he accepted the Order of Merit. He died in 1904 at the great age of eighty-seven, his last years having been spent chiefly in his country house at Compton, Surrey, where a large permanent collection of his works is still visible to the public.

§ 5

Orchardson

Watts for nobility of thought and conception and Stevens for grandeur of design and execution will, in all probability, be considered by posterity to have been the two most eminent artists of the Victorian era, but though it may be less easy to find, among the painters, the outstanding giants who mark the same period in literature, the very number of names as distinguished as they are familiar show how active and flourishing the arts were during the Queen's long reign. Many artists who enjoyed, and still enjoy, a wide popularity must necessarily be omitted from this Outline, but no survey, however hasty, of Victorian painting can ignore the band of Scottish artists who won fame in the south as well as in the north. Among them we may mention the historical and romantic painter John Pettie (1839-93); Peter Graham, the cattle-painter; John MacWhirter, the popular painter of the Highlands; William M'Taggart, unrivalled in his delicate yet vigorous renderings of foaming seas and windy shores; and Sir W. Q. Orchardson, the leader of this band of Scottish students, and one of the most polished, typical, and popular of all Victorian artists. William Quiller Orchardson (1835-1910) was born in Edinburgh and came to London about 1862, and thereafter maintained and held his position as one of the most popular of Academy exhibitors. He excelled in a variety of subjects; his "Sir Walter Gilbey" and "Master Baby" —a group of his wife and child—rank among the great portraits of the nineteenth century; "Napoleon on Board the *Bellerophon*" (see illustration facing page 325) is one of the best-known and most admired of modern historical paintings; but perhaps the

best-loved of all his works are those paintings of contemporary life, like "The Tender Chord" (see illustration facing page 324), which, without being positively "anecdotal," yet suggest a story and convey a sentiment. It was the distinction of Orchardson that his story-telling was never crude and obvious, his sentiment was always gentle and refined, his execution was suave and accomplished, so that his pictures, often representing moods of wistful reverie, charmed the eye of the beholder and at the same time conjured up a scene which dwelt in the memory and made its own appeal to the imagination.

XIX

THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT IN FRANCE

THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT IN FRANCE

THE ART OF DELACROIX, GÉRICAULT, COROT, MILLET, AND THE BARBIZON SCHOOL

§ 1

SOME thirty years before the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood began its triumphant fight in England for the free expression of new ideals in art, a similar struggle between old and new schools of artists was waged with extraordinary vehemence in France. We saw in Chapter XVI how under the Revolution and the Empire a cold classicism was the dominating tendency in French painting, and how gradually there arose among the younger artists a reaction against this traditional art. The spirit of unrest, which profoundly agitated France after the restoration of the Bourbons and culminated in the revolutionary explosion of 1848, first began to show itself in the art and literature of the younger generation. On one hand were the defenders of tradition, of the "grand style" of Academic painting, defenders of the classic ideal based on the sculpture of ancient Greece and Rome; on the other were ardent young reformers, intoxicated with the colour and movement of life itself, who found their inspiration, not in the classics, but in romantic literature, in Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Byron, and Sir Walter Scott. Passion, movement, the imaginative expression of life were the aims of this group of artists, who became known as the Romantics.

Géricault

"Who will deliver us from the Greeks and Romans?" was a catchword among the young enthusiasts who found more beauty in life and nature than in the masterpieces of ancient sculpture. The deliverer was found in the ranks of the reactionaries, in a young artist who was the pùpil of Guérin the classicist. Jean Louis André Théodore Géricault was born at Rouen in 1791 and came to Paris about 1806, studying first with Carle Vernet and afterwards with Guérin. His method of drawing was so different from that approved by the school of David, that it exasperated his "correct" and academic master, who told Géricault he had better give up Art because it was evident he would never succeed in it.

One day as Géricault was walking along a road near St. Cloud, a dapple-grey horse in a cart turned restive and plunged about in the sunshine. Géricault whipped out his sketch-book and jotted down notes of the movement of the animal and the play of light and shade on his dappled coat, and these notes gave him the idea of a great picture. He would paint an equestrian portrait, not the stiff image of a man on a wooden horse, but a vivid presentment of the plunging, sun-illumined animal he had seen. He persuaded his friend Lieutenant Dieudonné to pose for the rider, and he had a cab-horse brought round each morning that he might freshen his eye with the points of the horse. Working with the highest enthusiasm and energy Géricault, in the space of a fortnight, produced his "Officier des Chasseurs à Cheval," now in the Louvre. This picture created a sensation in the Paris Salon of 1812.

Two years afterwards Géricault repeated his success with a companion picture, "The Wounded Cuirassier," and after a short period of military service—when he had further opportunities of studying his favourite equine models—he went in 1817 to Italy, where he "trembled" before the works of Michael Angelo, who henceforward became his inspiration and idol.

Copyright photo: Eyre & Spottiswoode, Ltd.

"THE GLEANERS," BY J. F. MILLET

The Louvre, Paris.

This master of democratic art painted the common life of the peasant in the fields with a depth of feeling, sympathy, and understanding that had never previously been approached. There is epic grandeur in the figures of these three women, whose sturdy forms are contrasted with the still beauty of the sunlit landscape.

When Géricault returned to France in 1818, he found all Paris talking about nothing but a naval disaster of two years earlier, an account of which had just been published by two of the survivors. The drama of the shipwreck of the *Medusa* seized upon the imagination of the artist, who determined to make it the subject of a picture. He spent months in collecting material for this work. He found the carpenter of the *Medusa* and induced him to make a model of the famous raft by which the survivors were saved. He spent days in hospitals studying the effects of illness and suffering. He persuaded two of the surviving officers of the ship to give him sittings, and painted one leaning against the mast and the other holding out his two arms towards the rescuing ship on the horizon. All his models were taken from life, and it is interesting to note that his friend the famous artist Eugène Delacroix posed for the man who lies inert on the left with his head against the edge of the raft.

These methods of painting—though afterwards employed by the Pre-Raphaelites—were then a complete innovation in painting, and the painting was so novel in conception, so contrary to the received ideas of the time, that when it was at length completed and shown in the Salon in 1819 it was at first greeted with nothing but abuse. Nevertheless, this picture marks a turning-point in the history of French painting, it brought strong feeling and pulsating life into the barren and frozen official art, and gave new ideals to the younger generation.

At the time, the genius of Géricault was more highly appreciated in England than in France, and after the exhibition of his masterpiece the artist visited London, where his drawings and paintings of horses were intensely admired, and Géricault did signal service to the art of both countries by returning to Paris full of praise for the painting of Bonington and Constable, whose pictures he introduced to and made known in Paris. Unfortunately for the world this great genius was short-lived. Early in 1823 he was stricken down by a mortal illness, and

after eleven months of terrible suffering, borne with fortitude and composure, he died in January, 1824, at the early age of thirty-three. His place at the head of the Romantic School was taken by Delacroix, who had been his friend and fellow-student in the studio of Guérin.

Delacroix

Ferdinand Victor Eugène Delacroix was born at Charenton in 1798, but spent his early years at Marseilles, where he gained that love of vivid colour and bright sunshine which afterwards distinguished his painting. His father, an ex-foreign minister under the Directory and subsequently prefect of Marseilles and Bordeaux, did not take kindly to the idea of his son becoming a painter, but he died before his son came of age, and Eugène Delacroix then found shelter with a married sister in Paris, where he overcame family opposition and was allowed to study art.

His father, however, had left him penniless, and the young artist was so poor that in 1822, after painting his first great picture, "The Barque of Dante," he could not afford to buy a frame, but sent the canvas to the Salon surrounded by four laths which he had coloured with yellow powder. There it was seen by Baron Gros, who generously recognised the great talent of the poor artist, and not only persuaded the administration to give the picture a handsome new frame, but hung it in a place of honour in the Salon Carré.

"The Barque of Dante" made the painter famous at once, and did not offend the classicists. Gros said the picture was "Rubens reformed," and paternally advised the artist, "Come to us; we will teach you how to draw." Delacroix was grateful to Gros for his kindness, but went his own way, and two years later he shocked the classicists and delighted the romantics by his picture, "The Massacre of Scio."

It will be remembered that Constable's "Hay Wain" was

exhibited in the Paris Salon of 1824, and when Delacroix saw it he was so overwhelmed by its colour that he obtained permission to retouch his own "Massacre of Scio." In a fortnight he completely repainted this picture, using the purest and most vivid colours he could find, with the result that it now became as brilliant in colour as it had already been in action and movement. The turbulent energy in this painting was too much for the classicists, and Gros, playing on the title, said, "This is the massacre of painting." On the other hand, enthusiastic young critics lauded the picture with extravagant praise, one of them asserting that it showed up "all the horror of despotism" in art as in life.

In this picture, which was the real beginning of his lasting fame, Delacroix proved himself to be one of the world's great colourists, and laid the foundations of the new handling of colour which became the greatest pictorial triumph of the nineteenth century. Colour in his hands was no dead thing, it became something alive, scintillating and vibrating; his results were obtained not only by the happy choice of individual tints, but still more by the science with which he knew how to juxtapose one colour against another so as to accentuate the brilliancy of each and secure a glowing harmony.

The art of Delacroix is distinguished by three things—its colour, its poetry, and its decorative qualities. He turned naturally to Dante, Shakespeare, and Byron for subjects, not so much because they provided him with good themes to illustrate, as because in their poetry he found those passionate ideals and aspirations which animated his own mind. When actual events aroused a similar intensity of emotion, he painted them also. Though usually he eschewed political subjects, the Revolution of July, 1830, moved him to paint his famous picture "The Barricade," now known as "Liberty Guiding the People" (see illustration facing page 340), a picture which is at once a fragment of actuality and the embodiment of an ideal. For this

is a true historical picture in so far as it does represent with fidelity a typical incident during the street-fighting of the revolution; and at the same time the heroine of the barricade, with her Phrygian cap, streaming tri-colour, and musket, is an allegory of Liberty, liberty for the people and liberty for art. Exhibited in the Salon of 1831 this picture perplexed the authorities, who could neither deny its excellence as a work of art nor altogether approve of its firebrand politics. The Director of Fine Arts temporarily solved the problem by purchasing the picture for the nation, and then turning its face to the wall! To-day the picture is one of the chief treasures of the French School in the Louvre.

In the same year Delacroix made a journey to Morocco which had a considerable effect on his art, for he delighted alike in the brilliant colours and picturesque costumes of this sunny land, and on his return exhibited a number of pictures of Eastern subjects, which were enthusiastically received, and, inspiring other artists to do likewise, he gave birth to a school of artists known as the "Orientalists." Delacroix himself, however, was too big and varied a genius to confine himself to one subject, and having given a lead to the Orientalists he now devoted much of his time to decorative painting.

Though regarded by his great rival Ingres and by the classical painters as a revolutionary, Delacroix was full of respect for tradition, only whereas David and Ingres adhered to the tradition of Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci, Géricault and Delacroix upheld the tradition of Michael Angelo, Titian, Veronese, and Rubens. Though his own researches into colour were perhaps his most valuable legacy to the art of France, the intention of Delacroix was not to break with tradition but to bring back the colour and methods of the old masters into modern painting. The romanticism of Delacroix was a half-way house between the old classicism and the realism that was coming, and as he in his youth had challenged the position of

Photo: Braun.

"THE BARRICADE," OR "LIBERTY GUIDING THE PEOPLE," BY DELACROIX (1798–1863)

The Louvre, Paris.

This remarkable picture by the great leader of the Romantic Movement in France is a true rendering of an incident during the street-fighting of the revolution in July 1830 when the Parisians deposed the unpopular Charles X and placed his cousin Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, on the throne—and at the same time the heroine of the Barricade may be regarded as an allegorical figure of Liberty guiding the People.

Photo: Braun.

"THE RAFT OF THE *MEDUSA*," BY GÉRICAULT (1791–1824)

The Louvre, Paris.

Inspired by the heroic endurance of the survivors from a [illegible] in 1816, this picture of a contemporary event, painted with [illegible] vigour and dramatic force, marks a turning-point in the history of French painting. It brought back life and reality into a period, [illegible] and [illegible] to the younger generation.

Ingres and the Classicists, so in his later years his own romanticism was challenged by Courbet the Realist.

Owing to this long battle between the classics and the romantics, the doors of the Academy were closed against Delacroix for five-and-thirty years, and it was not till he was sixty—and so barred by age from holding a professorship at the École des Beaux-Arts—that he was at last admitted as a member of the Institute. The artist did not long enjoy the distinction, for he died at Paris in 1863.

§ 2

While Géricault, Delacroix, and other "Romantics" were liberating the painting of history, poetry, and real life from the trammels of classicism, another group of French painters was engaged in rescuing landscape-painting from the deadness and artificiality which had overtaken it since the days of Poussin and Claude Lorrain.

Corot

Among the earliest of the French artists to paint nature as she is, and not as the pedantic "classics" thought she ought to be, was Jean Baptiste Camille Corot (1796-1875). Born in Paris, the son of a small linen-draper having a shop in the Rue de Bac, Corot was for eight years a commercial traveller in the cloth trade. It was not till he was twenty-six that he was reluctantly allowed by his family to abandon trade and devote himself to painting. His father made him an allowance of sixty pounds a year, and till he was nearing fifty this was practically all Corot had to live upon.

In 1822 he entered the studio of Victor Bertin (1775-1825), a painter of classical landscape so successful in his day that the French Government, attracted by his own work and that of his pupils, created a new Prix de Rome for Landscape Painting.

This prize was usually carried off by Bertin's pupils, who thus came to regard Rome as the finishing school of their artistic education. The turning-point in Corot's life came in 1826, when he also went to Rome, and there he formed a friendship with another French painter, Aligny (1798-1871), who had some influence on his early efforts. Aligny, though a classical painter, had a much more honest feeling for nature than most of his kind, and though his pictures are rigid in execution they show unusual carefulness in composition and detail. The early Roman paintings of Corot are distinguished by precise drawing, careful composition, and a deliberate soberness of detail, but they also have a lovely limpidity of colour unequalled in the work of his contemporaries, and a delicate feeling for light and air. Breaking away from the brown convention of his day, Corot painted southern landscape and architectural subjects in delicate tints of pale blues and greens, light biscuit-colour and pearly greys.

For some seven or eight years Corot remained in Italy, gradually forming a style which was absolutely his own and in which, while remaining true to the actual facts of nature, he expressed her most poetical aspects. Occasionally he also painted pictures with small figures, and these, with their precision and delicate colour and subtle lighting, were nearer akin to the Dutch style of Vermeer and other seventeenth-century masters than to the accepted styles of Italian figure-painting.

It is strange to think that the paintings of Corot—for which millionaires now eagerly offer thousands of pounds—were for long years utterly neglected by his contemporaries. He exhibited regularly in the Paris Salon from 1827, but his exhibits aroused neither censure nor admiration—they were simply ignored. *For thirty years he never sold a picture.* The first critic to notice his work was the poet Alfred de Musset, who praised his picture in the Salon of 1836, but with the exception of two favourable notices received in 1837 and 1847, he was

generally as neglected by the press as by the public. It was not till he was sixty that Corot began to capture the attention of the critics and collectors.

The one great compensation that Corot possessed during these years was the affection of a number of his brother artists, who both admired the artist and loved the man. Corot possessed a sunny, tender, tranquil nature that endeared him to all who came in contact with him. He was never embittered by his want of success, but lived the life of a peasant, happy in his art. "Le Père Corot" became the beloved patriarch of a colony of artists who had settled in the little village of Barbizon in the forest of Fontainebleau, a spot attractive to artists by the richness and variety of its sylvan scenery and at the same time reasonably near to the exhibition centre, Paris. In this district Corot painted the most famous pictures of his later days, e.g. "The Pool" (see illustration facing page 347) and "Souvenir of Mortefontaine" (see illustration facing page 348). He particularly delighted in the poetic effects of early morning and approaching eve, "when all nature sings in tune," and during the glare of the noonday sun he would retire indoors, for effects of brilliant sunshine did not make the same appeal to him. He preferred the minor to the major chords of nature's colouring, and was the supreme interpreter of her moods of wistfulness, mystery, and reverie.

Though the dreamy poetical beauty of Corot's later landscapes, with their willowy trees and mysterious atmosphere, made an unprecedented appeal to American and British collectors towards the end of the nineteenth century, so that extravagant prices were paid for typical examples—in one year more so-called "Corots" were said to have been imported into the United States than Corot himself could ever have painted—it is only in comparatively recent years that the supreme excellence of Corot's early works and figure paintings have become recognised.

Jules Dupré

More immediately successful than Corot was his friend Jules Dupré (1812-89), whom Corot called "the Beethoven of Landscape." Dupré was the son of a porcelain manufacturer at Nantes and, like several other distinguished artists of the time, began his career by painting on china. He was one of the pioneers of "natural" landscape in France, turning away from the medley of the classical painters to render with fresh observation and expressive detail the characteristic beauties of rural France, her pastures, forests, and villages.

Rousseau

One of the most vigorous and famous of the Barbizon School, Théodore Rousseau (1812-67), was born in the same year as Dupré and, like him, was an enthusiastic admirer of Constable. Rousseau was the son of a Paris tailor and, though town-born, he experienced the fascination of the forest in his early boyhood, when he stayed with an uncle who had sawmills near Besançon. This uncle persuaded his parents to allow Théodore to study art, and accordingly the young man was placed in a Paris studio. From his masters, mediocre painters of classic landscape, Rousseau learnt less than from nature, and a very early picture, painted in the open air at Montmartre—then almost country—showed a remarkable mastery in rendering air, light, and the details of nature. In 1831 his first landscape was accepted and hung in the Salon; in 1833 he began his studies in the Forest of Fontainebleau, and again exhibited with credit; and in 1834 his picture of "A Cutting in the Forest of Compiègne" was awarded a medal, and was bought by the young Duke of Orleans. This early success, far from bringing him fortune, proved disastrous, for the older landscape painters, jealous of his growing reputation and his power, cruelly determined henceforward to exclude his work from the Salon. Accordingly in 1836 his magnificent "Descente des Vaches"—a great picture of herds of cattle coming

Photo: Braun.

"THE LADY IN BLUE," BY COROT

The Louvre, Paris.

Universally admired as a landscape painter, Corot is less known as a figure painter because these subjects are rarer and until recently have been hidden away in private collections. This beautiful work, painted when the artist was a veteran of seventy-eight, is one of his last pictures and reveals his exquisite skill and refinement in portraiture.

Photo: Braun.

"SPRING," BY COROT

This delightful picture of a young girl gathering flowers shows the power of Corot in interpreting moods of wistfulness and reverie, whether in nature or human beings.

down in autumn from the high pastures of the Jura—was rejected by the Salon. The picture is now one of the chief treasures of the Mesdag Museum in The Hague.

For fourteen years the work of Rousseau was excluded from the Salons; as a result of this attack Rousseau in 1837 left Paris for Barbizon, where he was joined by other independent painters. After the Revolution of 1848 the work of Rousseau began to be known and appreciated, but though his pictures now began to sell and he was awarded a first medal in 1849 and the Legion of Honour in 1852, he made no change in his life and continued at Barbizon till his death in 1867.

Corot, with characteristic modesty, once said: "Rousseau is an eagle; as for me, I am only a lark who utters little cries among the grey clouds." There was indeed a great difference between the two men, for Rousseau did not look at nature with the dreamy gaze of a poet, but with the fiery glance of a scientist who would wrest all her secrets from her. He delighted in the infinite details of nature, and while preserving her breadth and majesty, he delicately differentiated between plants and weeds, mosses and lichens, brushwood and shrubs. Nothing was too great for his soaring imagination, nothing too small for his earnest attention. His vigorous rendering of form and his searching characterisation of nature may be seen in "The Oaks" (see illustration facing page 349).

Diaz

Friendship and admiration for Rousseau had a great effect on the life of Virgilio Narcisse Diaz de la Pena (1808-76), commonly known as Diaz. This painter was born at Bordeaux, whither his father, a political refugee, had fled from Spain, and after his death, which occurred soon afterwards, Mme. Diaz removed to Sèvres, where she supported her young family by giving lessons in Spanish and Italian. When he was fifteen years old he was apprenticed to learn china-painting, but he soon tired of

working at the factory and spent all his spare time in painting romantic Eastern scenes from his imagination. About 1830, while still earning his living by painting on porcelain, Diaz met Rousseau in Paris, and this acquaintance ripened into a lifelong friendship. Taught by Rousseau how to use pure and brilliant colours so that his pictures glowed like jewels, the pictures of Diaz appealed to the public by their subjects and were soon sought after. At first Diaz painted nymphs and bathers, mythological subjects and Oriental scenes, the last so brilliant in colour that it is difficult to believe Diaz never saw the Orient and never travelled farther than a few hundred miles from Paris.

Though he had little to complain about on his own account, Diaz shared the fortunes of his friend Rousseau, and accompanied him to Barbizon in 1837. There he gave his mind almost entirely to landscape, and made a new reputation by his brilliant forest pictures with light glancing on the tree stems.

Troyon

Like Diaz and Dupré, the famous cattle painter Troyon (1810-65) began as a painter on porcelain. His father, who had been employed at the Sèvres Porcelain Factory, died early, and while quite young boys Troyon and his brother earned a living by painting on china at the manufactory, and in their spare time sketched from nature in the surrounding country. It was not till he was thirty-two that Constant Troyon was able to leave Sèvres and commence his studies in Paris, and for some years his progress was hampered by the somewhat niggling style of painting he had acquired from the habit of decorating porcelain, but devoting himself especially to the painting of animals he gradually acquired strength and breadth, though he was nearly forty before he gained the power that has since made him famous. When he did find himself, however, the success of Troyon was immediate. He was speedily recognised by his contemporaries as the greatest animal-painter since Cuyp and Paul Potter, and

Photo: Braun.

"THE SOWER," BY MILLET (1814–75)

This world-famous figure is a noble expression of Millet's feeling for the dignity of labour, and can also be regarded as a universal symbol of the Present sowing the Future.

Photo: Braun.

"ON THE BANKS OF THE OISE," BY DAUBIGNY (1817–78)

A characteristic example of the peaceful river scenes which this artist painted with tender fidelity and poetic feeling.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE POOL," BY COROT (1796–1875)

The Louvre, Paris.

The most poetic of landscape painters, Corot was long neglected by his contemporaries. Beginning life as a commercial traveller, he exhibited his first painting when he was thirty-one, but he never sold a picture till he had turned sixty.

the demand for his work was so great that Troyon sometimes employed other painters to put in backgrounds and accessories. Troyon excelled in showing living beasts in their natural surroundings, and the landscapes in his cattle-pictures are not mere "black-cloths" but genuine studies which interpret with sincerity the weather, the time of day, and the season of the year. His most famous masterpiece is his great painting "Oxen going to Work" (see illustration facing page 348) in the Louvre, in which the superb rendering of the animals is equalled by the splendour with which the artist has rendered the full glory of the early morning landscape.

Daubigny

Though much influenced by Corot, who regarded him almost as a son, Charles François Daubigny (1817-78) evolved another distinct type of landscape and excelled in his poetic renderings of placid river-scenes. His father was a journeyman painter of mediocre ability, and as a boy Daubigny painted decorations on clock-cases, glove-boxes, fans, and other articles of luxury. When he was seventeen he and a friend saved up a little over fifty pounds with which they set out on foot for Italy, and there maintained themselves for nearly a year. Returning to Paris, Daubigny gave himself for a time to figure subjects, but about 1840 he turned definitely to landscape, which he discovered to be his true vocation. His favourite sketching-ground was near Valmondois on the Oise, where he had spent happy days in his childhood. Though his landscapes were exhibited regularly in the Salon from 1841 to 1847, Daubigny had a hard struggle during these years, but in 1848 he received a second medal for his five landscapes in the Salon, and thereafter the State began to buy his pictures for provincial museums and his sales generally improved.

"On the Banks of the Oise" (see illustration facing this page) is a beautiful and characteristic example of the art of Dau-

bigny, and reveals that exquisite calm and repose which is a feature of many of his paintings, though occasionally he painted stormy scenes; for Daubigny was not limited in his subjects, but painted various aspects of nature. He was one of the pioneers in the truer rendering of nature's own colouring, and his famous saying, "We never paint light enough," became a watchword to the younger generation of artists.

§ 3

Millet

The great struggle for liberty and truth in art, begun by the Romantics and landscape-painters already mentioned, was carried a stage further by Jean François Millet (1814-75), who was the first to paint the peasant, not as a sort of "stage property" in a landscape, but as he truly lived and moved. Millet came of peasant stock and during his boyhood worked hard in the fields with his father, whose home was in the hamlet of Gruchy, near Cherbourg. When he was eighteen, his father, recognising the lad's talent, allowed him to study art in Cherbourg, but as the eldest son he returned to manage the farm on his father's death in 1835. His heart, however, was still in his art, and seeing this his mother and grandmother heroically determined not to allow him to sacrifice himself, but soon persuaded him to return to Cherbourg. There his talent was recognised by the Municipality, who gave him a grant of forty pounds, and with this he went to Paris in 1836 and entered the studio of the historical painter Paul Delaroche (1797-1856). During the next twelve years, spent partly in Paris and partly in Normandy, Millet experienced nothing but trouble, distress, and discouragement. Though always in poverty, he married in 1841, and his wife died in 1844; at the end of 1845 he married again, and found a devoted and courageous helpmate in his second wife.

At this period of his life Millet chiefly painted portraits and

Photo: Alinari.

"OXEN GOING TO WORK," BY TROYON (1810–65)

The Louvre, Paris.

The masterpiece of the most celebrated painter of cattle in the nineteenth century, this picture is remarkable not only for the life-like rendering of the beasts but also for its brilliant expression of the full glory of a summer morning.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"SOUVENIR OF MORTEFONTAINE," BY COROT

The Louvre, Paris.

One of Corot's most famous masterpieces, this picture is an example both of his poetic feeling and of his adherence to classic methods of composition. Note how the picture is divided diagonally into two triangles of light and shade, an arrangement which contributes to the feeling of repose which the painting inspires.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE HARBOUR OF TROUVILLE," BY BOUDIN (1825–98)

National Gallery, London.

A link between the Barbizon School and the Impressionists, Boudin excelled in rendering the pearly tints of clear grey days. His marine paintings are pitched in a higher key of colour than that usually employed by the Barbizon painters.

Photo: Braun.

"THE OAKS," BY THÉODORE ROUSSEAU (1812–67)

The Louvre, Paris.

The most vigorous of the Barbizon School, Rousseau, as we may see in this picture, delighted in the infinite variety of nature, and while strongly characterising her details, yet contrived to preserve her breadth and majesty.

small pictures of classical or mythological subjects, and already his colour—in which he was considerably influenced by Correggio—began to attract attention and the admiration of other artists. He became friendly with Diaz, and through Diaz got to know Rousseau and others. In 1847 his picture "Œdipus taken from the Tree" was favourably noticed in the Salon by Théophile Gautier, who prophesied that the painter would become famous, and in the following year Millet's picture of a peasant woman was given a place of honour in the best room at the Salon. It looked as if the painter was on the point of achieving a popular success, for he had also been finding a ready sale for small pictures of nude figures, which he painted with great skill. But about this time he accidentally overheard somebody speaking of him as "Millet, who paints nothing but naked women," and this chance remark so upset him that he then and there determined never again to paint the nude. Already town life and town manners were distasteful to him; he longed for country air to breathe and the peasant people whom he knew and loved to paint.

In 1849 he decided to change his manner of life, and with his wife and babies he removed to Barbizon, where Rousseau and Diaz were already settled. In this peaceful village Millet made his home, and found his true vocation in chronicling in a series of noble paintings the dignity of peasant labour. To the Salon of 1850 he sent his unforgettable picture of "The Sower" (see illustration facing page 346), a work of epic grandeur which seems to symbolise the Present preparing the Future in the guise of an agricultural labourer fulfilling his common task. During the next ten years Millet painted some of his greatest pictures, "The Gleaners" (see colour-plate) in 1857, "The Angelus" in 1859, but all this time Millet was harassed by money difficulties, and with a growing and increasing family he had a hard struggle for mere existence. His new pictures were not popular; not only did they fail to find purchasers, but they were often attacked because many of them were thought to be "socialistic," and "The

Gleaners" was particularly abused on its first appearance as a work expressing subversive political principles. Millet and his family might have starved at this time, but for the good deeds stealthily done by his more fortunate comrades. In 1855 Rousseau secretly bought one of his pictures for £160, and Troyon also bought several of Millet's works, pretending that he was acting for an American collector who had no real existence. By this tactful generosity Millet was prevented from ever knowing how much he owed to the devotion of his friends.

It was not till the Great Exhibition at Paris in 1867 that Millet came into his own, and his opportunity came then because his friend Théodore Rousseau was President of the Jury. In this exhibition Millet was represented by "The Angelus," "The Gleaners," and seven other important paintings. He was awarded a first-class medal for the collection, and in the following year was made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. He was now at the height of his fame, but the honours and fortune which followed came too late to be enjoyed. The artist was deeply smitten by the death of Rousseau in December, 1867, and his own health began to fail in 1870. During the disastrous Franco-Prussian war he retired to Cherbourg, where his work was interrupted by frequent illnesses. When he returned to Paris the new Republican Government gave Millet a commission in 1874 to paint a set of decorative panels of "The Four Seasons" for the Panthéon, but though he at once began charcoal sketches for these subjects he was never able to execute the paintings. Throughout the autumn his health declined, and surrounded by his devoted family he died on the 20th January, 1875.

Closely associated with Millet, whom he accompanied to Barbizon, was Charles Jacque (1813-94), who, though less powerful than Troyon, was one of the best animal-painters of his time. He excelled in painting flocks of sheep in the open or on the edge of a forest. The painting of peasant life, inaugurated by Millet, was continued by Bastien Lepage (1848-

84) and the still more popular Jules Breton (1827-1906), who, though weaker in drawing and less rich in colour, reaped where Millet had sown. Associated with Diaz, and still more fantastic than this painter in the exotic pictures of his earlier years, was Adolphe Monticelli (1824-86). Born at Marseilles, Monticelli brought the warmth of Southern colouring and imagination to Barbizon: he was the most romantic of the romantic landscape painters, and his canvases, loaded with rich pigment, from which radiant fairy-like figures emerge and seem to quiver with life, are magical masterpieces of jewel-like colour.

Boudin

Belonging to a slightly later generation, but encouraged in his youth by Corot, Daubigny, and Millet, the exquisite sea-painter Eugène Boudin (1825-98) is a link between the Barbizon School and the Impressionists. Boudin was born at Honfleur, where his father was a sea-captain, and during his early years he assisted Troyon by painting the skies in some of his pictures. This was a department of painting in which Boudin excelled, and his rendering of the clouds and the blue vault of heaven excited the keen admiration of Corot, who hailed his young contemporary as "the monarch of the sky." Boudin spent the greater part of his life in the neighbourhood of his birthplace, and never tired of painting the shipping, shores, and harbour scenes of this part of the Normandy coast. His paintings are pitched in a slightly higher key of colour than those of Corot and Daubigny, and the prevalence of luminous pearly greys in his work have caused his paintings—together with similar paintings of similar subjects by his slightly older contemporary, the Dutchman Bartholde Jongkind—to be known as *la peinture gris,* i.e. the "grey" school of painting. "The Harbour of Trouville" (see illustration facing page 349) in the National Gallery is a beautiful example of Boudin's delicate realism and of his sensitive feeling for the wind in the sky and the light on the water.

XX

THE MODERN DUTCH SCHOOL

THE MODERN DUTCH SCHOOL

THE ART OF JOSEPH ISRAELS, ROELOFS, MAUVE, MESDAG, BLOMMERS, AND THE BROTHERS MARIS

§ 1

FOR more than a hundred years after the deaths of Hobbema and Willem van de Velde, Holland produced no painter of European importance. The Dutch School, which during the seventeenth century had risen, as we have seen, to the highest eminence, sank during the eighteenth century into trivial virtuosity. Pictures became conjuring feats rather than true works of art, for they evoked neither tender sentiments nor noble thoughts, but only excited wonder by their manual dexterity. In craftsmanship many of these paintings were remarkable in their meticulous detail, and while some painters—like Willem van Mieris (1662-1747), whose "Fish and Poultry Shop" is in the National Gallery—carried on the traditions left by Jan Steen and Gerard Dou, still more made a reputation among their contemporaries by their minute rendering of fruit and flowers. These they painted with the patient skill of a miniaturist, and they delighted in introducing into their pictures flies and other small insects whose tiny, but marvellously realistic forms, had to be discerned with the aid of a magnifying-glass. Among the artists who excelled in this style of painting may be mentioned the woman-painter of Amsterdam, Rachel Ruysch (1664-1750), and her contemporary, Jan van Huysum (1682-1749), both of whom are represented in the National Gallery. Here we may

see how skilfully they both painted flowers, how cunningly the one introduces a butterfly, the other a snail; but we soon weary of this pettifogging cleverness, which may amuse our eyes for a few moments, but can never touch our hearts.

Bosboom

It was not till towards the middle of the nineteenth century that any great revival of painting showed itself in Holland. One who helped to prepare the ground for the new generation was Johannes Bosboom (1817-91), who painted impressive pictures in oils and water-colours of the interiors of Dutch churches and cathedrals. He was influenced by the seventeenth-century painter Emanuel de Witte (1607-92), who had also painted these subjects not only with great accuracy of linear perspective but with broad effects of light-and-shade; Bosboom painted these interiors still more broadly and invested them with a dim atmosphere of grave grandeur and solemnity.

Bosboom always gives us a more or less generalised vision, and contrasted with the particularity of the painters who immediately preceded him, he may be said to have given a new direction to Dutch painting.

Roelofs

Another pioneer and forerunner of the modern movement was Willem Roelofs, who was born at Amsterdam in 1822, and went to France, where he made the acquaintance of Corot and other members of the Barbizon School. For some time Roelofs lived with these artists in the now famous village and painted the forest of Fontainebleau in their company; then he returned to the Netherlands, taking with him new ideals of landscape painting. Though he lived chiefly in Brussels, Roelofs had a considerable influence on Dutch painting. He was never an imitator of Corot, Daubigny, or Troyon, though he learnt something from all of them, as we may see in his picture "A Summer's Day" (see il-

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"A SUMMER'S DAY," BY WILLEM ROELOFS (1822–97)

One of the pioneers of the Modern Dutch School, Roelofs worked at Fountainebleau with the painters of Barbizon and introduced their ideals of landscape painting into the Netherlands. This picture is a fine example of his tender fidelity to nature and of the radiant beauty of his lighting.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE SAND CART," BY ANTON MAUVE (1838–88)

This tender rendering of a typical incident in the workaday life of the seashore captivates us by its winning simplicity, its entire truth, and its atmosphere of repose. Mauve was the most lyrical of the Dutch painters, and his pictures have a serene quality of placid contentment.

lustration facing page 356), and it was through him that a knowledge and appreciation of their paintings first spread through Belgium and Holland. Roelofs helped to found at Brussels in 1868 the *Société Libre des Beaux Arts* (Free Society of Fine Arts), of which Corot, Daubigny, and Millet became honorary members, and to this exhibition both Dutch and Belgian artists contributed. It became the rallying-point of the younger generation and of those painters who were beginning to be affected by the Barbizon pictures which so many of them had seen in Paris. After living in Brussels for forty years Roelofs moved to The Hague, where he died in 1897.

§ 2

Israels

The debt of the modern Dutch painters to France cannot be ignored, but we must remember that Holland possessed in Rembrandt one of the greatest of the old masters, and though his influence seemed to slumber for two centuries in his own country, it was shortly to prove itself to be alive once more. The greatest figure in this school is Josef Israels, and his art must be regarded as a blending of the influence of Rembrandt with that of Jean François Millet, plus the remarkable personality of the painter himself. Israels was one of the earliest as well as one of the greatest of the modern Dutch painters. He was born on January 27, 1824, at Groningen, of Hebrew parents, his father being a money-changer and broker. As a boy his first ambition was to be a rabbi; at an early age he studied Hebrew and buried himself in the Talmud, and he was well in his 'teens before he displayed a marked leaning towards art. Meanwhile his father intended Josef for a business career, but while working under his father as a stock-broker's clerk Josef Israels surreptitiously obtained lessons in painting from local artists, and though their talent was

but mediocre their pupil soon began to display such unmistakable gifts that parental opposition was overcome and he was allowed to go to Amsterdam to study art. He lodged with an orthodox Jewish family in the Ghetto, and all that he saw in the Jewish Quarter himself, combined with the religious paintings and etchings of Rembrandt based on the life in that quarter—which had altered so little since Rembrandt's time—made a profound impression on him, and had a more lasting influence than anything he learnt from his master, Jan Kruseman, who, though a successful portrait-painter of his time, was a dry and uninteresting artist. In 1845 Israels left Amsterdam to study in Paris, but here again he was not very fortunate in his master. He entered the studio of Picot, who had been a pupil of David, and so far from being in touch with the ideals of the "men of 1830," he was brought up to admire historical paintings in the classical style. When Israels returned to Amsterdam in 1848 he was chiefly influenced by the French historical painter Delaroche, and he began painting historical and dramatic subjects in which, beneath the French polish, the influence of Rembrandt was nevertheless discernible. But Israels had not yet found himself, and it was some years before he did. The critical period in the artistic career of Israels was about 1856. In 1855 he showed in the Paris Salon a historical picture, "The Prince of Orange for the first time opposing the Execution of the Orders of the King of Spain"; in 1857 his exhibits at the Paris Salon were "Children by the Sea" and "Evening on the Beach," two tender impressions of commonplace, everyday scenes on the coast near Katwijk. These last pictures are by the Israels we know; the picture of 1855 might have been by almost any historical painter of the period. How did this change come, and what brought it about?

It was life, not art nor any artist, that changed the whole spirit of Israels' painting. He had a serious illness while he was living at Amsterdam, and when convalescent went to Zantvoort, a little fishing village close to Haarlem, to recruit his health. He

Photo: W. A Mansell & Co.

"A HAPPY FAMILY," BY JOSEF ISRAELS (1824–1911)

In this exquisitely lighted picture of the humble home of a Dutch fisherman, the painter gives us a touching study of domestic contentment and bids us ponder on the lives of people who can be happy with so little.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"ALONE IN THE WORLD," BY JOSEF ISRAELS

"The sorrows of the poor are as deep as the tragical fate of ancient heroes." In this moving picture of a wife who has just lost her beloved husband, Israels expresses his deep feeling for the daily tragedy of life.

lodged there with a ship's carpenter, and living the life of these simple, kindly seafaring folk, Israels was struck by the drama, pathos, and tragedy in the common lot. At Zantvoort he made the same discovery that Millet had made at Barbizon, namely, that to a sympathetic and understanding spectator the common life of the people even in a remote, secluded village is as full of romance, thrills, and tragedy as the pages of any history book. Israels discovered that "the events of the present are capable of being painted and the sorrows of the poor are as deep as the tragical fate of ancient heroes." A new vein of artistic expression was now opened to him, and henceforward he painted the life of the poor and humble, and found in typical, everyday episodes motives for expressing with peculiar intensity his wide human sympathy.

It may be said, therefore, that the art of Josef Israels, though he received his training in Paris, was far more the fruit of his own experience of life than the outcome of French influence. We feel that even if Millet had never existed Israels would not have painted otherwise than he did, and though the subject-matter of their respective pictures are akin, there are considerable differences between them. Millet painted his peasants out-of-doors in the light of the sun; Israels pictured his fisher-folk by preference indoors, in dim interiors. Hence his pictures are usually more subdued in colour than those of Millet. Israels painted low life in low tones and built up his visions of life, whether in oilpaintings, water-colours, or etchings—and he worked in all three mediums—by broad masses of light and shade. Further, his tendency is to be more tragic than Millet, and many of his pictures have not inaccurately been described as "piercing notes of woe." One of his most famous pictures, "Alone in the World" (see illustration facing this page), contains the essence of his art. In the treatment, in the rays of light dimly illuminating the gloom which befits the subject, we see the influence of Rembrandt; while in the bowed figure of the lonely widow, with

her open Bible by her side, we have a poignant expression of the artist's deep feeling for the daily tragedy of life.

In 1870 Josef Israels left Amsterdam and moved to The Hague, where he lived till he died on August 12, 1911, respected, honoured, and world-famous. He was a painter who appealed equally to the general public and to connoisseurs, and though so many of his works are tragic, this never interfered with his popularity, because he pictured the tragedies of common life which all have experienced and all can understand. Further, if he reached his highest intensity of expression in rendering sorrow, suffering, endurance, and the pathos of old age, Israels was not wholly tragic in his art. Pictures like "A Frugal Meal" (see Colour Plate) and "A Happy Family" (see illustration facing page 358) show the reverse of the medal, the compensations of poverty, and the happiness of the humble. But even in these scenes of domestic contentment there is something touching, and the philosophy of Israels seems to bid us to ponder on the life of people who can be happy with so little.

Mesdag

When Josef Israels was a young man, working as a clerk under his father, one of his frequent duties was to take a money-bag to the bank of a Mr. Mesdag. This banker had a son Hendrik Willem Mesdag, born at Groningen on February 25, 1831, who also became a famous painter. For many years H. W. Mesdag practised art as an amateur, and it was not till he had amassed a considerable fortune in business that he retired from banking and devoted himself entirely to painting. Thus Mesdag was not only in the independent position of being able to paint what he pleased, without thinking of the taste of buyers, but he was also wealthy enough to help his brother artists whose works he admired.

In 1866, when he was thirty-five years of age, Mesdag went to Brussels, where his friend and relative Alma Tadema was then

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"A FRUGAL MEAL," BY JOSEF ISRAELS

Glasgow Art Gallery

One of the greatest domestic painters of the nineteenth century, Israels interpreted the indoor, home life of the peasant as the Frenchman Millet recorded his labour in the fields. Making his home in the little Dutch village of Zandvoort, near Haarlem, Israels discovered the human drama and pathos in everyday life. In this characteristic picture he shows us "the treasure of humanity," and invests a homely repast with the solemnity and poignancy of a sacrament.

residing. Roelofs also was living in Brussels, and it was under his guidance that the banker began the serious studies which should fit him to make art henceforward his profession. Mesdag stayed three years at Brussels and returned in 1869 to The Hague, no longer an active man of business but an artist. He was not only a painter himself but a collector of paintings, and in course of time he formed a very important collection of modern pictures, chiefly of the Barbizon and Modern Dutch Schools, which in 1903 he generously presented to the public. The Mesdag Museum at The Hague is a lasting monument of his own taste and of the genius of his contemporaries. As a painter Mesdag gave himself almost exclusively to the painting of the sea, and his marines are remarkable for their luminosity, truth, and the vigour of their handling. "A Seascape" (see illustration facing page 362) is a good example of his power of suggesting the life and movement of the waves and of his skill in placing shipping, so that his picture is at once absolutely natural and yet decorative in design.

The numerous painters of the modern Dutch School—almost as numerous as the "Little Masters" of the seventeenth century —may broadly be divided into two classes, the figure or genre painters for whom Israels was the chief influence, and the landscape painters who were inspired by Roelofs and the French painters of Barbizon. Among the genre painters we may mention Albert Neuhuys, born at Utrecht in 1844, who approaches closely to Israels in his grave tender renderings of humble interiors; David Adolf Constant Artz (1837-90), who, in addition to interiors, painted the fisher-folk of Scheveningen out-of-doors, frequently at moments when they were resting on the sand-hills; and Bernardus Johannes Blommers, born at The Hague in 1845, who developed in his own way the lighter side of the art of Israels. There is nothing tragic in the pictures of Blommers, whose favourite subjects are children playing on the sands at Scheveningen or paddling in the water. "On the Beach" (see illustra-

tion facing page 363) is a typical example of the happy seaside scenes in which the artist displays alike his love of children and his knowledge of sea and sky.

§ 3

Mauve

Of the landscape painters of modern Holland, the nearest to Corot—nearest in the delicacy of his colouring and in the lyrical note that rings out clearly in all his work—is Anton Mauve (1838-88). The son of a Baptist minister, Mauve was born at Naandam and brought up in a strict Protestant home, where art was not encouraged. It was much against the will of his parents that he eventually took up art, and he made little progress under his first master, Van Os, a dry academic painter whose stiff style had little attraction for his sensitive, rather dreamy pupil. The earliest paintings of Mauve were tightly drawn and highly finished, but later, after he had made the acquaintance of Israels, Willem Maris, and other artists in Amsterdam, he completely changed his style, his handling became looser and broader, and he restricted his palette to delicate greys, greens, light fawns, and pale blues. When he was thirty he exhibited at the Free Society in Brussels, and he was influenced by the French artists who exhibited there, particularly by Corot and by Daubigny, whose works he saw in the house of Mr. Mesdag and other places in Holland. Mauve soon began to excel in landscape, rendering the soft hazy atmosphere that lingers over the meadows of Holland with infinite tenderness and poetic truth. The sand-dunes near Scheveningen were for many years his favourite sketching-ground, and it was there that he painted one of the most popular of his pictures, "The Sand Cart" (see illustration facing page 357). It is a painting that captivates us at once by its winning simplicity, its entire truth, and the atmosphere of repose which it exhales; and this reposefulness is a general characteristic of the

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"A SEASCAPE," BY H. W. MESDAG (1831–1915)

Originally a banker by profession, Mesdag retired from business at the age of thirty-five and henceforward devoting himself to art he became the foremost marine painter in Holland. This picture is a fine example of his vigorous rendering of the life and movement of the waves and of his skill in placing shipping, so that his picture is at once absolutely natural and also decorative.

Photo: T. & R. Annan.

"ON THE BEACH," BY B. J. BLOMMERS (1845–1914)

A typical example of the happy art of this painter, displaying his love of children and his knowledge of sea and sky. A disciple of Israels, Blommers developed the lighter side of that master's art.

art of Mauve, though his subjects are usually taken from work-aday life. We do not think of him primarily as an animal-painter, though his love of animals is made clear by the frequency with which he introduces them into his pictures. But Mauve's animals never seem to have been painted solely for their own sake; they are part and parcel of the landscape, in which they take a natural place, fulfilling their allotted function as aids to human activity. Each of Mauve's landscapes has the animals appropriate to it. He painted horses—for many years his "Watering Horses," belonging to Mr. J. C. J. Drucker, was lent to the National Gallery—but he also painted donkeys on the seashore, cows in meadows and on the road, sheep at pasture and in their pens. The fine collection of Mauve's work in the Mesdag Museum at The Hague contains examples of all these subjects. Towards the end of his life Mauve painted sheep more frequently than any other animals, the reason being that after living at Amsterdam and The Hague he settled at Laren, which is in the heart of the sheep country to the north-east of Amsterdam. Mauve took all rural and seashore life for his province; he painted fishermen and fisherwives at a fish-auction on the beach, he painted groups of peasants gathered together at a timber sale, drawing the various types of faces with great insight and humour, but in all his pictures life is pleasant and work proceeds placidly in an atmosphere of peace and contentment.

§ 4

The Brothers Maris

Three of the most famous and most interesting of the modern Dutch painters were members of one family, all born at The Hague and the sons of a struggling printer. This printer, Maris by name, was of foreign extraction, being the son of a Bohemian soldier of fortune who left his native city of Prague, married a Dutch wife, and settled in the political capital of Holland. The

printer also had some experience of fighting, for in 1830 he was called up as a conscript to fight on the side of the Netherlands in the war which resulted in the independence of Belgium. After this war the printer returned to a life of unbroken toil, married, and had three sons. Of these the eldest was Jacob (or James) Maris, born in 1837, next came Matthys (or Matthew), born in 1839, while the youngest, Willem, was born in 1844. In speaking of these brothers we shall here use the English equivalents of their names by which they are usually known in Great Britain and the United States.

All three sons showed at an early age remarkable talents for drawing, and notwithstanding his poverty their father appears to have realised the wisdom of allowing each to follow his artistic bent. In their early years James and Matthew were closely associated. In 1855 the talent of the latter came to the notice of Queen Sophie of Holland, who made him an allowance, and the thrifty father considering that this allowance was enough for two, both James and Matthew were able to spend a year studying and painting at the Antwerp Academy. At Antwerp the two brothers lived in the same house as Alma Tadema, and through him they got to know his relative Mesdag, the banker-painter, Josef Israels, and other Dutch artists. But in these early days neither brother was much affected by the art of his immediate contemporaries. They laboured strenuously to master the technicalities of their art, and James was guided in his first efforts by a master named Van Hove. This artist, though of mediocre ability, was a very conscientious draughtsman, and under his influence James Maris produced pictures remarkable for the minuteness of the details. One of his early pictures, "Interior of a Dutch House," painted when the artist was twenty-three, is in the Mesdag Museum, and is quite in the style of Pieter de Hoogh. In the middle distance, on the left, is a sunny nook; in the foreground is the figure of a servant girl standing in the entrance hall, holding in her right hand a basket and in her left a

By courtesy of Barbizon House.

"THE SISTERS," BY MATTHEW MARIS (1839–1917)

Matthew Maris, the second of three brothers, all of whom won fame as painters, was the most romantic of the modern Dutch painters. This beautiful example of his art was painted in 1875 at London, where the artist made his home from 1872 till the time of his death.

By courtesy of Barbizon House.

"THE GIRL AT THE WELL," BY MATTHEW MARIS

One of the earliest pictures painted at London by this artist, who in 1872 had rooms in St. James' [illegible] remarkable blend of romantic imagination with realistic treatment.

pewter can. All these details are painted with scrupulous exactness, and the same characteristics may be found in other domestic scenes and interiors which he painted in these early years.

It was not till he was nearing thirty that James Maris changed his manner of painting and acquired the style which eventually brought him fame. In 1865 he went to Paris, where he remained for six years, and there, under the influence of the Barbizon masters, he gradually broadened his style, abandoning his former intimacy of detail and now aiming at a more general effect of grandeur. Henceforward he devoted himself almost exclusively to landscape, and though the change of his style was brought about by French painting, his mature work is akin to that of Ruysdael in the nobility and majesty of its outlook. We can hardly escape thinking of Ruysdael's "Mill" when we see "The Stone Mill" by James Maris in the Mesdag Museum; a picturesque stone mill, with an open gallery round it, makes a stately figure against a sky with white drifting clouds. In the foreground are sandhills, in the distance the red roofs of a village, but though the accessories taken together make up a scene quite distinct from that shown in Ruysdael's famous picture, both pictures have a touch of sublimity in the dignity of their design. Equally characteristic of the way in which this artist subordinates particular objects to the general effect is his painting of "Dordrecht" (see illustration facing page 368). All details are merged in these masses of light and shade, yet everyone who has seen this town at eventide will agree that the painter has given us the essential characteristics of the "Venice of the North," its Groote Kerke, its shipping, its wide canals, and the rolling grey sky overhead, and has presented these with incomparable dignity and grandeur.

William Maris is more limited in his range than either of his brothers, and though in their early days the work of all three showed a certain similarity of style, William's work altered least in style and in subject. He is nearer to Roelofs than either of his

brothers, and his favourite subjects were landscapes with cattle, which he painted, as a rule, in full daylight, so that his pictures are rather brighter and gayer in colour than those of his brothers. A meadow extending along the border of the sandhills, in which are seen a few stunted trees and some cows, a pond perhaps in the immediate foreground, and a cloudy sky overhead, this is a typical William Maris subject. Less poetic than Mauve, less grand than his brother James, and less romantic than his brother Matthew, William Maris was a happy realist whose rich coloured pictures are full of sunshine and mirror the luxuriant green of Holland's pasture lands.

Matthew Maris

Matthew Maris stands apart from his brothers and from all the Dutch artists of his generation. He was different in his temperament, different in his life, and different in his art. Tracing it to his foreign extraction, to his Austrian, or, as we should now say, to his Czecho-Slovak blood, Professor Muther says there broke out in Matthew Maris a "Teutonic mediæval mysticism" from which his brothers were free. Matthew no doubt possessed a romantic mystical temperament, but it is possible that he was influenced by the romantic mediævalism of Rossetti. It was in England that Matthew Maris painted his most characteristic pictures, and in England, where he lived for forty-five years, he drifted apart from his brethren in his art as in his life.

The beginnings of Matthew were almost parallel with those of James. The two brothers studied, as we have seen, at The Hague and Antwerp, and they were together in Paris. One incident must be chronicled which appears to have had far more influence on Matthew than on James. In 1858 the two brothers were back from Antwerp at The Hague, and three years later, having made some money by copying pictures, the two set out together on a tour through the Black Forest to Switzerland, returning through France by Dijon to the Puy-de-Dôme. Matthew

was tremendously impressed by the romantic castles and buildings he saw in Central France; to his poetic imagination they were enchanted palaces. The recollection of this tour never faded from his mind, and in pictures painted years afterwards we catch echoes of the turrets and battlements which remained fixed in his memory. We may see evidence of this in the background of "Feeding Chickens" (see illustration facing page 369), painted in 1872.

Nevertheless it is important to note that there is not the same note of romanticism in pictures he painted only two years earlier. In 1868 Matthew joined his brother James in Paris, and we may see in the National Gallery a little picture he painted there in 1870. "Montmartre," as it is called, shows us dust-carts tipping rubbish on the side of a hill which has a windmill at the top. It is beautifully painted, perfect in its refined realism, but it is not romantic.

When the Franco-Prussian war broke out James Maris returned to Holland. Matthew remained, went through the siege of Paris, and, like other residents, was enrolled in the Municipal Guard and called out for duty. His post was on the fortifications, opposite Asnières and just under Mount Valérien, and he suffered considerably from the bitter cold during night duty. Military life was not congenial to this gentle artist, and the thought of killing anybody was abhorrent to him. He confessed afterwards, "I never put a bullet in my gun, but only pretended to do so!"

His war experiences certainly did Matthew Maris no good; they saddened him and tended to make him shrink into himself, so that he became more and more of a recluse. After the siege Matthew Maris came to London in 1872, and there he remained to the end of his days. He had rooms at first in the house of an art decorator named Daniel Cottier in St. James's Terrace, Regent's Park, and Cottier, a strong active business man, had much influence over him, telling him what sort of pictures he

ought to paint. Although Cottier, an admirer of Rossetti, undoubtedly encouraged the romantic element in the Dutch artist, Matthew Maris rebelled at painting under his direction and professed that he was thoroughly unhappy in his house. Yet between 1872 and 1875, when he was under the spell of Cottier, Matthew Maris painted what are generally considered to be his finest pictures. Among them we may mention "The Girl at the Well" (see illustration facing page 365) and "Feeding Chickens" (see page 369), painted in 1872; "The Christening" and "Enfant Couchée" (see illustration facing this page), in 1873; "He is Coming"—a most Rossetti-like vision of a little princess at her spindle with a prince seen approaching through the open door—in 1874; and "The Sisters" (see illustration facing page 364) in 1875. Yet even these works, full of indescribable poetry and romantic beauty, failed to satisfy the artist, who in after years would speak of them as "pot-boilers" which he had been compelled to paint by a tyrannical taskmaster.

Though discontented and professedly unhappy, Matthew Maris was slow to leave what he regarded as a house of bondage, and it was not till 1887—and then chiefly because Mrs. Cottier was in ill-health—that he finally left. He went to 47 St. John's Wood Terrace, intending to remain there only a fortnight, while he looked around for a more convenient studio, and he stayed there nineteen years. In 1906 he found a home at 18 Westbourne Square, Paddington, in a half-flat with a small painting-room, and in this modest abode, tended by a faithful housekeeper, he remained till he died on August 17, 1917. He seldom went out and he had few visitors, the most intimate friends of his later years being the Dutch picture-dealer, Mr. E. J. Van Wisselingh and his wife, a Scottish lady, daughter of Mr. Craibe Angus, of Glasgow, who had been one of the earliest British patrons of Matthew Maris. His later paintings became more and more mysterious; instead of the clear outlines of his earlier pictures forms were seen dimly as through a mist, and these pictures he

By courtesy of Barbizon House.

"ENFANT COUCHÉE," BY MATTHEW MARIS

An example of "the delightful quality of faiëry and enchantment which so strongly characterises some of the works of Matthew Maris." It has a quality "for ever young and simple as of the glorified vision of a child."

Photo: W. A. Mansell

"FEEDING CHICKENS," BY MATTHEW MARIS

This picture painted in 1872, shows how the artist could invest a commonplace incident of farm life with the magic of poetry The "enchanted towers" in the background are probably a memory of the romantic castles and buildings in Central France which made a lasting impression on the artist when he saw them in 1861 while travelling from Dijon to the Puy-de-Dôme.

Photo: T. & R. Annan.

"DORDRECHT," BY JAMES MARIS (1837–99)

A majestic vision at eventide of the "Venice of the North," with its Groote Kerke, its wide canals, and its shipping. It is a fine example of the manner in which this artist, the eldest of the three brothers, subordinated details to the grandeur of the general effect.

would work over and over many times, each re-painting seeming to cast a new veil over faces and figures that became more and more spiritual. Had he wished, Matthew Maris might have had fortune as well as fame, for there were ardent collectors in many countries eager to secure examples of his works, but his means were straitened largely because he could with difficulty bring himself to part with a picture and desired to keep them all in his painting-room. In 1911 a Dutch admirer of his work, Mr. Thomsen, of The Hague, offered to the compatriot of whom he was proud a small pension. This the painter accepted, and the pension was continued till his death.

An abnormal being, Matthew Maris was "alone in the world," because he chose of his own accord to live the life of a hermit shut up with his dreams.

XXI

THE INFLUENCE OF THE FAR EAST

THE INFLUENCE OF THE FAR EAST

JAPANESE COLOUR-PRINTS AND THE ART OF WHISTLER

§ 1

TO attempt any historical survey of the art of the East is beyond the scope of this OUTLINE, but since several of the most distinguished Western painters of the nineteenth century were profoundly influenced by the art of China and Japan, it is necessary to make some brief mention of the wonderful art of the Far East and to record the genesis of its appreciation in Europe in order that we may perceive the part it played in shaping the style of certain modern masters.

Chinese Painting

Painting in water-colours on silk, or less often on paper, was practised in China from the earliest years of the Christian era. One of the oldest Chinese pictures known to exist is a scroll-painting called "Admonitions of the Instructress" in the British Museum. This has been pronounced by experts to be a work of the fourth century, but it has none of the characteristics of a primitive work executed when an art is in its infancy. The mastery of natural attitude and of the relation of figures to each other and the delicate expressiveness of the drawing prove that behind the art which produced it is a long history of development.

Chinese painting attained its highest excellence during the Sung Dynasty, i.e. approximately between A.D. 950 and 1250, and to this period belongs the masterly painting of "Two Geese" (see illustration facing page 376) in the British Museum. The

exquisitely refined drawing and simple naturalism in this dignified bird painting show the high state of civilisation in China at a time when Europe was only painfully emerging from the Dark Ages. We have only to turn back to the first chapter of this work and to compare the paintings of Cimabue or of Giotto with this still earlier picture from the East, to realise how superior was the naturalism of the Chinese artist to that of the most gifted of the earliest European painters. The art of the Sung period excelled in landscape and animal painting, and it was "inspired by a mystical feeling for nature (akin to that expressed by Wordsworth's poetry) which gives a serious beauty to its treatment of simple or seemingly insignificant subjects."

Japanese Colour-Prints

It is only in quite recent times, however, that Western artists have been attracted by the nobility of early Chinese art. In the nineteenth century Chinese paintings were scarce and little known in Europe, and the first examples of Oriental art made familiar to Europe were colour-prints from Japan. Though the Japanese to-day have a deservedly high reputation as an artistic nation, China was their instructress in all the arts. The art of printing in colours from a number of wood blocks in succession was practised in China in the seventeenth century, perhaps earlier, but it was not till the eighteenth century that it flourished in Japan. In that country the demand for a popular art had fostered a school of painting devoted to themes of daily life, and the woodcut provided a cheap means of multiplying designs. At first, in the early part of the eighteenth century, these woodcuts were coloured by hand, then prints were made in two colours, rose-red and green, and in 1764 the first full-coloured prints, known as "brocade prints," were issued. Harunobu (1705-72) was the first master to use the new invention, which during the next hundred years was to produce the most beautiful examples of colour-printing that the world has seen.

Photo: T. & R. Annan.

"LA PRINCESSE DE LA PORCELAINE," BY WHISTLER

One of the masterpieces of Whistler's pronounced Japanese period, this picture is a costume portrait of Miss Christina Spartali, daughter of the Greek Consul-General in London. It was formerly in the possession of the ship-owner Mr. F. R. Leyland, and occupied a central position in the famous "Peacock Room" decorated for him by Whistler.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

NOCTURNE—BLUE AND GOLD—"OLD BATTERSEA BRIDGE," BY WHISTLER

Tate Gallery, London.

One of the celebrated nocturnes exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877, when Ruskin accused Whistler of "flinging a pot of paint in the public's face." The painter was awarded only a farthing damages in the libel action which ensued; but two years after Whistler's death, this picture, for which he had asked 200 guineas, was purchased at 2,000 guineas for the National Gallery.

From the time of Harunobu to the death of Utamaro in 1806, a succession of artists poured forth a series of these popular pictures, which were sold for the merest trifle, chiefly to the working classes of Japan. The painters of Japan catered for aristocratic tastes and were patronised by the wealthy and eminent, but the makers of colour-prints were democratic both in origin and aim and were regarded socially as artisans rather than artists. The aristocratic painters of Japan, like those of China, were symbolists, whose work conveyed subtle allusions to educated Orientals; but the designers of colour-prints were realists, who rendered the common life of everyday people. Among the Japanese this art, despised by the higher classes, was named the "Mirror of the Passing World." With the common people of Japan the drama was an overwhelming passion, and consequently the subjects of innumerable colour-prints are taken from the stage, which provided endless themes. In all the earlier Japanese colour-prints figures predominate, but after the death of Utamaro a great artist arose in Hokusai (1760-1849), who invented a new landscape style. Hokusai was followed by other great landscape artists, Hiroshige (1796-1858) and his successor Hiroshige II, who worked *c.* 1840-65, and the splendid landscape designs by these artists were the first to make their influence felt in Europe.

Hokusai

Hokusai is now generally regarded as one of the world's great artists, worthy to rank with Rembrandt, Durer, and other giants. His "River Scene" (see illustration facing page 380), with the great bridge over the water and Fujiyama in the distance, shows his unsurpassed skill in the technique of his art, the largeness of his view, and the intense human interest with which he invested every scene he painted. A master of the first order as a draughtsman, Hokusai was also a daring pioneer as a colourist, being the first to combine the particular greens, blues, yellows, and browns which distinguish his famous series "Thirty-

six Views of Fujiyama," to use the telling contrast of red, bright blue, and brown seen in his "Views of the Loochoo Islands," and to harmonise with infinite tenderness a whole gamut of greens and blues in his great designs based on carps. Hokusai lived to a great age, his death occurring when he was approaching his ninetieth birthday, and shortly before he expired he murmured, "If Fate had given me but five more years, I should have been able to become a true painter." He was not only one of the greatest and most poetic of the world's artists, he was one of the most modest.

The beginning of the artistic influence of Japan on Europe is generally dated from the International Exhibition held at London in 1862, when the examples of Japanese art there shown made a profound impression on all who studied them. Seidlitz in his *History of Japanese Colour Prints* gives the same date, but this authority traces the first discovery of Japanese art in Europe to a Japanese shop in the Rue de Rivoli, Paris. This shop, known as "La Porte Chinoise" and owned by a dealer named Soye, was frequented by a number of artists who delighted in the colour-prints by Hokusai, Hiroshige, and others which they found there. To this shop came Manet, Degas, Monet, and other French artists afterwards to become famous, and to it also came a young American artist, James McNeill Whistler. The Japanese have a perfect instinct of decoration, and consequently these colour-prints made an immediate and powerful appeal to a young artist who already had within him the instinct of decoration. In the work of Hokusai and Hiroshige, Whistler recognised those qualities which above all he desired to have in his own work.

§ 2

Among the artists of the nineteenth century Whistler holds a unique position. He was the first great painter of American birth to win universal renown. His life was a long struggle against hostile criticism and misunderstanding, and he defended

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"TWO GEESE," BY A CHINESE ARTIST OF THE SUNG PERIOD (A.D. 950–1250).

British Museum, London.

A superb example of the naturalism and refinement of Chinese Art in the tenth century, when Europe was only beginning to emerge from the Dark Ages.

The decorative use of the silhouette here may be compared with Whistler's use of it in his portraits of his Mother and Miss Alexander.

Photo: Rischgitz Collection.

"AT THE PIANO," BY WHISTLER (1834–1903)

This early work, painted in 1859, was the first picture the artist exhibited in London. It shows us Whistler's favourite niece, Annie and her mother, Mrs. Seymour Haden, who was the artist's half-sister.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"CREMORNE LIGHTS," BY WHISTLER

National Gallery, London.

"When the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry, as with a veil, and the poor buildings lose themselves in the dim sky, and the tall chimneys become campanili, and the warehouses are palaces in the night, and the whole city hangs in the heavens and fairyland is before us."—*J. McNeill Whistler.*

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"BLACK LION WHARF," BY WHISTLER

One of the most famous etchings in his early "Thames Set," this work shows the precision and delicacy of Whistler's draughtsmanship in 1859. He was the first artist to perceive and record the picturesqueness of the Thames in mid-London.

his art and his ideals with the pungent brilliancy of a wit and with the undaunted pugnacity of a soldier. By example and precept he eventually revolutionised English ideas about art and interior decoration. He compelled people who stubbornly repeated, "Every Picture Tells a Story," to realise at long last that *every picture ought to sing a tune,* that is to say, it ought to utter forth a melody of line and a harmony of colour; in a word, he compelled all England and the United States to recognise the decorative as well as the illustrative element in painting. More than any other English-speaking man Whistler opened our eyes to the true value of Velazquez and Hokusai, and he invented a new style of portraiture in which Spanish realism was exquisitely wedded to a Japanese sense of decoration. A stranger within our gates, he revealed England to the English and recorded both in his etchings and in his paintings poetic aspects of London's riverside, aspects to which hitherto all artists had been blind, aspects the beauty of which all can now see.

Whistler

Whistler was born on July 10, 1834, at Lowell in Massachusetts, and was baptised there with the Christian names of James Abbott. This second name he dropped in later life and substituted for it his mother's maiden name, McNeill. His father, Major George Washington Whistler, after leaving the United States army became a railway engineer, and in 1842 journeyed to Russia with his wife and family: he had been appointed chief adviser of the railway under construction between Moscow and Petrograd. The most important consequence to James Whistler of this boyhood stay in Russia was that in Petrograd he learnt to speak French fluently. His father died in 1849, when the widow returned with her children to the United States.

Following in his father's footsteps, James Whistler in 1851 entered the military college of West Point, but after three years of desultory study he was dismissed, chiefly owing to his deplor-

able failure in chemistry. The first question in his oral examination floored him completely, and later in life Whistler humorously said, "If Silicon had been a gas I might have become a general in the United States army." Even from his Russian days Whistler had shown a remarkable capacity for drawing, and his delight in sketching prompted his relatives, after his West Point failure, to obtain for him a post as draughtsman in the Government Coast Survey Department at Washington, thinking that this occupation might be more congenial to him. To some extent it was, for here he learnt to engrave and etch, and he executed an excellent plate of a view, taken from the sea, of cliffs along the coast, but the fancy heads and figures which he irrelevantly added in the margin showed that he could not take his topographical studies seriously as a preliminary to map-making, but only as an excuse for sketching. In February, 1855, he resigned his position, and the end of the year found him an art student in Paris.

In Paris

Many painters have spent joyous student-days in Paris, but few of them bear the traces of it in their lives as Whistler did. He had barely turned twenty-one when he arrived in Paris, and his high-spirited temperament and sense of fun delighted in all the antics which then distinguished the Bohemians of the Latin Quarter. In those days the art students lived a life apart, making themselves noticed by wearing unorthodox clothes, playing all sorts of practical jokes, affecting to despise the common mortal, and never so happy as when they succeeded in shocking and bewildering what they called the "bourgeois." Whistler plunged hot-foot into this way of life, and, as the distinguished French critic M. Théodore Duret, who knew him well, has remarked, there was grafted on him "the habit of a separate pose, whimsical attire, a way of despising and setting at defiance the 'vulgar herd' incapable of seeing and feeling like an artist. This combination of the distinctive characteristics of a French art student

and the manner of an American gentleman, in a man otherwise full of life, spirit, and individuality, made of Whistler a quaint original who could not fail to be remarked everywhere."

But all the time he was amusing himself he worked, not so much in the studio of Gleyre—his official place of training, but irregularly attended—as in the streets and cafés of Paris and in his rooms. He divided his time between etching and painting, and in the former he appeared almost as a master in the first "French Set" published as early as 1858. In the following year he produced his first great achievement in painting, "At the Piano" (see illustration facing page 376), which, though rejected by the Paris Salon of 1859, was hung at the Royal Academy in 1860 and subsequently purchased by the Academician John Philip, R.A. In this picture, which represents his half-sister, Mrs. Seymour Haden, seated, playing the piano, against which her little daughter Annie, in white, is standing, Whistler already shows the influence of Velazquez. Philip was well known as an intense admirer of this master, and it was doubtless the Spanish qualities in Whistler's painting which led the older artist to buy it. Two years later Whistler set out for Madrid with the intention of seeing the pictures by Velazquez in the Prado, but on the way he stopped at a seaside resort, where he nearly got drowned while bathing and had to return to Paris without going to Madrid.

In 1863 he made his second attempt to exhibit in the Paris Salon, and again the jury rejected his picture, the full-length portrait of a young Irish girl, known as "Jo," dressed in white, holding a white flower, and standing against a white curtain. "The White Girl," as it was first called, was the beginning of a series of pictures in which Whistler deliberately experimented in improvising a colour harmony based on the infinitely delicate gradations of one dominant colour. It was afterwards entitled "Symphony in White No. I."

So many paintings by artists of great talent were rejected by the Salon this year that the Emperor Napoleon III inter-

vened, and by his order a selection of the rejected works was shown in a special room which became famous as the "Salon des Refusés." Of this epoch-making exhibition more will be said in in the next chapter, when dealing with French painters who were Whistler's contemporaries, but for the moment it must suffice to say that among the works there exhibited was "The White Girl," which elicited high praise from the more advanced critics.

From 1859 Whistler had divided his time between Paris and London, and though he had many friends and admirers in the former city, he was hurt at the lack of official recognition. In 1863 he fixed his residence in London, where several of his family were already established. Whistler's father had married twice, and one of the daughters by his first wife had married the English surgeon Seymour Haden, who afterwards made a great reputation as an etcher. Whistler's mother had also now left America and was living in London with her second son William, a doctor. James Whistler himself had not only stayed and exhibited in London, but had worked there, for in 1859 he had already begun the series of etchings known as "The Thames Set," which marks the culminating point of his first etching period. "Black Lion Wharf" (see illustration facing page 377) may be taken as an example of the perfection of his technique in 1859, of the lightness and elasticity of his line, and of the vivacity of the whole. Though he afterwards produced etchings, perfect of their kind, in quite another style, Whistler never did anything better in their own way than some of the plates in "The Thames Set."

Whistler settled down in Chelsea and became friendly with his neighbour Rossetti, who shared his taste for blue-and-white Chinese porcelain and for Japanese colour-prints, and during his first years in London the artistic influence of the Far East became more pronounced in Whistler's art. He surrounded himself with Oriental objects and introduced them constantly into his pictures. In 1864 he painted "The Gold Screen," against which sat a young woman in Japanese costume surrounded by other variously

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"RIVER SCENE WITH BRIDGE AND FUJIYAMA IN THE DISTANCE," COLOUR-PRINT BY HOKUSAI (1760–1849)
British Museum, London.

An impressive example of the naturalistic and decorative powers of the greatest of the democratic artists of Japan. We have only to compare it with "Old Battersea Bridge" to learn how Whistler was influenced by the design of Hokusai.

Photo: Rischgitz Collection.

"SAN GIORGIO," 1880, BY WHISTLER

A brilliant example of Whistler's second manner in etching which he developed in Venice, where he stayed for some months after his bankruptcy. Again "fairyland is before us," and with the utmost economy of means the artist has suggested a characteristic aspect of Venice and its shipping, flooded with light and air.

Photo: Rischgitz Collection.

PORTRAIT OF MISS CICELY HENRIETTA ALEXANDER, BY WHISTLER

This charming portrait of the younger daughter of Mr. W. C. Alexander is one of Whistler's most daring colour-schemes, a bright harmony of grey and green. Note the butterflies in the left-hand top corner, which give a note of summer-time gaiety to the composition and repeat Whistler's own "trade-mark," the butterfly signature on the wall.

coloured objects from the Far East. About the same time he painted "La Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine" (see illustration facing 374), in which brilliant colours are again afforded by a Japanese dress. The original of this portrait was Miss Christina Spartali, daughter of the Greek Consul-General in London. Her sister Marie Spartali, afterwards Mrs. Stillman, had been a pupil of Rossetti and sat to him for "Fiametta" and other paintings. Owing to the family likeness common to the two sisters, it has been said that at this time Whistler was subject to Rossetti's influence, but the resemblance between their works is a superficial one due only to the likeness of their respective models. There is no evidence that Whistler borrowed any of Rossetti's methods, and the chief influences during the years in which Whistler formed his style of painting were Courbet and Manet—as we shall see in the next chapter—Velazquez and the masters of Japan. In etching he was principally influenced by Rembrandt and Méryon.

"The Princess of the Porcelain Country," accepted by the Salon in 1865, was the first work by Whistler to be shown in any official exhibition in Paris. Other pictures of this Japanese period were "The Lange Leizen," in the Academy of 1864, "The Balcony," in the Academy of 1870, and, most beautiful of all, "The Little White Girl" (see Colour-Plate), also known as "Symphony in White No. II," shown at the Academy in the same year. The Japanese fan in the girl's hand is the only direct confession of Oriental influence in this picture, which otherwise unites the Spanish gravity and realism of "At the Piano" with the gay-coloured decorativeness of a Hokusai or Hiroshige. After having seen this picture in Whistler's studio, Swinburne wrote the poem afterwards included in *Poems and Ballads:*

BEFORE THE MIRROR

Come snow, come wind or thunder,
High up in air,
I watch my face and wonder
At my bright hair.

Nought else exists or grieves
The rose at heart, that heaves
With love of her own leaves, and lips that pair.

I cannot tell what pleasures
Or what pains were,
What pale new loves and treasures
New years will bear;
What beam will fall, what shower
With grief or joy for dower,
But one thing knows the flower, the flower is fair.

Whistler also painted a "Symphony in White No. III": in this two girls, one in cream, one in white, recline on a white sofa, while a fan on the floor and the flowers of an azalea in a corner repeat the dominant whites. The motive of the artist in choosing these colour-schemes and calling the pictures "symphonies" was at this time beyond the comprehension of even professional art critics, and one of them wrote of this picture in the *Saturday Review:*

> In the "Symphony in White No. III" by Mr. Whistler there are many dainty varieties of tint, but it is not precisely a symphony in white. One lady has a yellowish dress and brown hair and a bit of blue ribbon, the other has a red fan, and there are flowers and green leaves. There is a girl in white on a white sofa, but even this girl has reddish hair; and of course there is the flesh colour of the complexions.

To this Whistler promptly retorted:

> *Bon Dieu!* did this wise person expect white hair and chalked faces? And does he then, in his astounding consequence, believe that a symphony in F contains no other note, but shall be a continued repetition of F, F, F? . . . Fool!

This was one of the earliest of Whistler's critical encounters, taking place when the picture was exhibited at the Academy in

1867, and the critics were soon to learn that here was a painter who could hit back with interest.

As the successive exhibition of Whistler's pictures enabled the tendencies and peculiarities of his work to be more clearly seen, the public, the critics, and the Royal Academy itself became more and more hostile to him, and finally took up an attitude of undisguised ill-will. In 1872 his painting of his mother (see illustration facing page 389), now universally recognised to be one of the great portraits of the century, was narrowly rejected by the Academy, and its final acceptance was only due to the staunch championship of the veteran Sir William Boxall, R.A., who threatened to resign from the Council if the picture were not hung. Doubtless Whistler's habit of giving his works titles borrowed from musical terms prejudiced the public against them. An extremist, far more in his titles than in his actual manner of painting, Whistler went so far as to call his picture of his mother, "Arrangement in Grey and Black." He defended this title by saying:

> That is what it is. To me it is interesting as a picture of my mother; but what can or ought the public to care about the identity of the portrait?

In his desire to emphasise the importance of decorative design and colour in painting, Whistler became a little inhuman. As one of his younger critics pertinently observed, we can find an "arrangement of grey and black" in a coal-scuttle; we find far more in Whistler's "Mother," we find reverence for age, character, tenderness, and affection. It has become one of the great pictures of the world not only because it is a pleasing pattern of colours, but because it is a true work of deep emotion tenderly expressed.

No longer welcome at the Royal Academy, Whistler was fortunate in soon securing a new exhibition centre. Sir Coutts Lindsay, a rich banker and amateur painter who patronised the

arts, had the Grosvenor Gallery built in Bond Street, and at the first exhibition opened there in May, 1877, Whistler was represented by seven pictures. These included the portrait of Carlyle, now at Glasgow, a painting similar in style to the artist's "Mother," described as "An Arrangement in Brown," a full-length of Irving as Phillip II of Spain described as "Arrangement in Black No. III," and four nocturnes, two in blue and silver, one in blue and gold, and one in black and gold. Whistler had not confined his studies of the Thames in mid-London to his etched work; he had used these subjects for paintings in the 'sixties, among them being "Old Battersea Bridge" and "Chelsea in Ice," but in this new series of evening effects by the riverside he shocked the conventions of the day more than he had yet done by his "symphonies."

These poetic paintings of night represent the extreme point of originality to which Whistler went. Particularities of scene and landscape exist in these nocturnes only as accessories; the real subject is the limpidity of the atmosphere, water illumined by the pale rays of the moon, mysterious shadows, the great silhouettes of dark nights, the darkness intensified sometimes by a splash of fireworks against the sky. To-day, though Cremorne is no more, we can recognise the truth as well as the beauty in "Cremorne Lights" (see illustration facing page 377), for Whistler has now taught us to use our own experience in looking at these pictures of moonlight and lights reflected in the water. But at the time of their first appearance these nocturnes were incomprehensible to most people, who looked in them for topographical details which the veil of night would naturally conceal. In an eloquent and moving passage in his lecture, known as the "Ten o'Clock," Whistler afterwards explained what he saw and painted by the Thames at eventide:

> When the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry, as with a veil, and the poor buildings lose themselves in the dim sky and the tall chimneys become campanili, and the

Photo W. J. Stacey.

"THE LITTLE WHITE GIRL," BY JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER

National Gallery, London.

For sheer beauty this portrait of his once favourite model, afterwards Mrs. Joanna Abbott, was never surpassed by Whistler. This picture inspired Swinburne to write his poem "Before the Mirror." In 1919 it was bequeathed by Mr. Arthur Studd to the National Gallery.

> warehouses are palaces in the night, and the whole city hangs in the heavens, and fairyland is before us—then the wayfarer hastens home; the working man and the cultured one, the wise man and the one of pleasure, cease to understand as they have ceased to see, and Nature, who, for once, has sung in tune, sings her exquisite song to the artist alone, her son and her master, her son in that he loves her, her master in that he knows her.

But in 1877 Whistler's views on the poetry of night were unknown, and the magic of his brush could not immediately convert the public to appreciation of pictures the like of which had never before been seen in Europe. Something approaching them had been seen in Japan, as we may see by comparing Hokusai's bridge pictures with those of Whistler, but Hokusai and Hiroshige were not known then as they are to-day. Whistler's nocturnes were regarded by the majority as a smear of uniform colour in which no distinct forms could be considered. The painter was looked upon as a charlatan and buffoon, and among those who attacked him, sad to relate, was the stout defender of Turner and the Pre-Raphaelites. John Ruskin, no wiser in this respect than the others, permitted himself to write the following in *Fors Clavigera* on July 2, 1877:

> For Mr. Whistler's own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsay ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approached the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen, and heard, much of cockney impudence before now; but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face.

Strange that Ruskin did not remember that the selfsame phrase about "flinging a pot of paint" had been used a generation earlier by a critic of one of Turner's sunsets. Then Ruskin had been on the side of the artist, now he did not understand and

stood with the Philistines. Time has avenged the insult to genius uncomprehended, and the "Nocturne—Blue and Gold—Old Battersea Bridge" (see illustration facing page 375), which Ruskin in 1877 thought not worth two hundred guineas, was in 1905 eagerly purchased for two thousand guineas and presented to the nation.

Whistler's exhibits brought him all the publicity any artist could desire—all London was talking of his nocturnes—but the hostility of the critics and particularly the savage onslaught of Ruskin scared away purchasers. .When he exhibited for the second time at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1878, Whistler found that Ruskin's denunciation was stopping the sale of his pictures and, after some hesitation, he decided to bring a libel action against him.

Whistler v. Ruskin

The case was heard on the 25th and 26th of November, 1878, before Mr. Justice Huddlestone and a special jury. It created a great sensation, but Whistler was ill advised to bring the action, because artistic questions can never be satisfactorily settled in a court of law. Popular sympathy was with the critic, who had so often been right in the past, and Whistler's brilliant repartees in the witness-box did him no good, for they only tended to confirm the opinion that he was an amusing jester who was not to be taken seriously. In cross-examination the opposing counsel elicited the fact that the "Nocturne in Black and Gold" had been painted in two days, and then said, "The labour of two days, then, is that for which you ask two hundred guineas?" "No," replied Whistler with dignity, "I ask it for the knowledge of a lifetime."

The point at issue really was whether the nocturnes were or were not works of art, and this was a matter obviously over the heads of the jury. Albert Moore, giving evidence for Whistler, praised his pictures highly and declared that they showed not "eccentricity" but "originality." William Rossetti also pro-

nounced the nocturnes to be true works of art, but on the other side Frith declared they were not, and Burne-Jones agreed with him because, though he admitted that the nocturnes had "fine colour and atmosphere," he considered that they lacked "complete finish." Tom Taylor, the art critic of *The Times,* giving evidence for Ruskin, attempted to explain what Burne-Jones meant by finish and for this purpose produced a picture by Titian. But when this was handed to the jury, one of them, mistaking it for a picture by Whistler, exclaimed, "Oh come! we've had enough of these Whistlers," and they all refused to look at it!

In the end Whistler was awarded the contemptuous sum of one farthing damages. This meant that he had to pay his own law costs, and since nobody would buy his pictures now he was soon in money difficulties. He revenged himself by issuing a pamphlet *Art and Art Critics,* in which his enemies were neatly and wittily put in their places, but this did not help him to live. To put an end to an untenable situation, early in 1879 he had to abandon his residence, "The White House," in Chelsea. He became a bankrupt, and all his belongings were sold to satisfy his creditors.

Another man might have been crushed by the misfortunes which now crowded on him, but fortunately Whistler was an etcher as well as a painter, and at this moment when his pictures were unsaleable he again turned to etching. He came to an arrangement with a firm which advanced him a sum of money on etchings he engaged to execute, and with this he went in 1879 to Venice, where he developed a new and beautiful style in etching. In comparison with his earlier work, these Venice etchings were lighter in handling and more simplified in line; but they palpitated with light and air and were fairy-like in their delicacy of decoration. "San Giorgio" (see illustration facing page 380) shows how spacious and satisfying an effect Whistler was now able to secure with a minimum of means.

These new etchings were not at first popular with the public

and the critics, any more than the nocturnes, but they were appreciated and purchased by many discriminating print-collectors, and when Whistler returned to Chelsea towards the end of 1880 his position gradually improved. In 1883 he held a second and larger exhibition of his Venetian pieces at the Fine Art Society, and prepared an extraordinary catalogue in which under each numbered exhibit appeared quotations taken from influential journals and well-known writers, *all hostile,* and beginning with this extract of *Truth:* "Another crop of Mr. Whistler's little jokes." The exhibition, which was beautifully arranged and staged, together with this quaint catalogue, caused an immense sensation. Never before had an artist made fun of his critics to this extent. Visitors could not fail to recognise the refinement in works like "San Giorgio," and when they read a sentence like "Whistler is eminently vulgar" the criticism recoiled on the writer, not the artist. The tide began to turn and a considerable opinion now became definitely favourable to Whistler. He began to paint again, people like Mrs. Meux, the wife of the brewer, and Lady Archibald Campbell came to him for portraits, and his position was immensely strengthened when his "Portrait of the Artist's Mother" obtained a medal and a brilliant success in the Paris Salon in 1883. Later this work was bought by the French Government for the Luxembourg.

For the next few years Whistler made Paris his principal exhibition centre. At the Grosvenor Gallery in 1881 his "Portrait of Miss Cicely Alexander" (see illustration facing page 381) had been dreadfully abused by English critics; in the Paris Salon of 1884 it was singled out for general approbation. For a brief season Whistler exhibited at the Royal Society of British Artists, of which he was elected President in June, 1886, and under his presidency this society held the most brilliant exhibitions in its history. But in 1888 there was a cabal against him by members discontented with his rule; Whistler was compelled to resign, and was followed by a number of talented artists whom he had

Photo: Autotype Co., Ltd.

"LE STRYGE," BY MÉRYON (1821–68)

The career of this great French etcher is one of the saddest tragedies in art history. Unable in his lifetime to sell his prints at tenpence apiece in sufficient numbers to save him from starvation, Charles Méryon died in a hospital literally from want of proper nourishment. A few years after his death his genius was so appreciated that his etchings were eagerly bought at £5 apiece, and in recent years collectors have paid over a thousand pounds for an etching which the artist could not sell for a franc.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE ARTIST'S MOTHER," BY WHISTLER

Luxembourg, Paris.

When M. Bourgeois, Minister of Fine Arts, expressed a desire to purchase this work for the French Nation, Whistler replied: "The picture you have chosen is precisely the one I could most earnestly wish to see become the object of so solemn a consecration."

persuaded to join the society. When asked to explain what had happened, the ex-President replied, "It is quite simple; the artists have left and the British remain."

The year after Whistler met with this rebuff in London, he was made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, which showed the esteem in which he was now held in France, and in 1892 he took a house at Paris in the Rue de Bac. He can hardly be said to have settled there, however, for he returned several times to London. In 1890 he had published a collection of letters and various controversial matter, including a report, with his own marginal comments, of the Ruskin trial, under the title of *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies,* and this publication not only increased his reputation as a wit but showed that he possessed a distinct literary style of his own. This was followed some years later by *The Baronet and the Butterfly,* a pamphlet giving the artist's version of a quarrel and lawsuit with Sir William Eden over a portrait of Lady Eden. Whistler had early adopted the device of a butterfly as his sign manual and signature, but he was a butterfly with a sting, as he confessed himself to be in the little drawings with which he decorated his publications.

All the quarrels and encounters of his stormy life cannot be recounted here, but in the end he was victorious in London as in Paris. The purchase of his "Mother" by the French Government helped to turn the scale in England. A new generation of artists gave Whistler a banquet in London to celebrate the event, and in the same year (1892) the most important one-man-show of his pictures yet held anywhere was opened in the old Goupil Gallery in Bond Street. This included nearly all his most famous works, among them the disgraced nocturnes, but now only a minority objected to his pictures or his titles, and the success of the exhibition revealed the change which the course of years had brought about in London opinion. The Royal Academy was no longer the power it had been in his earlier days; its prestige had declined, and there was now a powerful body of outside artists who admired

Whistler. In 1898 the most eminent of these formed the "International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers" and invited Whistler to become its first President, a position he held till his death on July 17, 1903. The exhibitions of this new society proved that Whistler was not only respected by artists but had become fashionable with all persons of taste.

To sum up, it may be said that after forty years of incessant battling, Whistler enjoyed a decade of tranquil success, but his last years were saddened by private trouble. In 1888 he had married the widow of E. W. Godwin, an architect, and his wife's death in 1896 was a great blow to the artist. With his loneliness he grew restless, and though his continued devotion to his work saved him from melancholy, he travelled about a good deal. He was visiting Holland in the summer of 1902 when he was seized with a heart attack, and though he gained enough strength to return to London and even to begin working again in the winter, a relapse in the following June prostrated him, and on Friday, July 17, after conversing good-humouredly during lunch, he was seized with syncope at 3 P.M. and died without suffering. France, Italy, Bavaria, and Dresden had all conferred distinctions on him; but in America, his birthplace, and in England, where he lived and worked for the greater part of his life, Whistler received no official recognition.

§ 3

Méryon

In his treatment of buildings, particularly in his earlier etchings, Whistler was undoubtedly influenced by the work of Charles Méryon, one of the earliest and greatest etchers of architectural subjects. The life of this artist is one of the saddest stories in modern art. Charles Méryon was born in 1821; he was the son of a French dancer and his father is said to have been an Englishman of good family, but during his early life he had little assistance from either of his parents, and from his boyhood he had to

struggle to make his own way in the Bohemian underworld of Paris.

During Méryon's lifetime, unfortunately, etchings were not so popular as they are to-day. For a century and a half after Rembrandt, etching, as a pure and separate art, lay comparatively unnoticed, but undeterred by want of patrons, poverty, and ill health, Méryon devoted himself to the revival of this almost forgotten art, and became one of its greatest masters that the world has yet seen. To record on copper the beauty and interest of the architecture of Paris became the passion of Méryon's life, and his etchings are unique for the imagination and emotional force they display combined with scrupulously exact drawing of the architectural features which form his theme. His famous etching "Le Stryge" (see illustration facing page 388), showing us a view of Paris from Notre Dame, with one of the quaint gargoyles of the Cathedral occupying a prominent place in the foreground, reveals not only the perfection of his technique, with its fine, nervous line and rich velvety blacks, but also the blend of realism and imagination which characterises this artist's work.

These masterly views of Paris were offered for sale by the artist at the price of one franc (then worth about tenpence in English money), but even at this ridiculous figure they did not find enough purchasers to enable him to keep body and soul together. Privation, hardship, and want of proper nourishment inevitably told on his health, and eventually his nerves gave way and he was put away as insane in the hospital of Charenton. But though of a nervous temperament, his brain was not diseased, and after some months of good feeding in the hospital Méryon became normal and it was seen that his break-down was wholly due to starvation. He was allowed to leave Charenton and began to work again drawing and etching in Paris, but the unhappy genius had no better fortune and seemed unable to secure the minimum amount of food that a human body requires. Again he starved,

with the same result, his mind became unhinged and he was taken back to Charenton, where he died in 1868.

By a cruel irony of fate the etchings began to be appreciated almost immediately after the etcher's death. Never before or since has the art world seen so rapid and sensational an increase in value. The explanation is that the interest excited by the plates of Whistler and Seymour Haden led to a feverish hunt after other etchers, and so the fame of Méryon was established. Within a few years of his death the etchings he had vainly tried to sell for tenpence apiece were changing hands at five pounds; the prices of them rose rapidly and steadily from tens to hundreds of pounds, and within recent years rich collectors have paid more than a thousand pounds to secure a fine impression of an etching by Méryon.

XXII

REALISM AND IMPRESSIONISM IN FRANCE

REALISM AND IMPRESSIONISM IN FRANCE

THE ART OF COURBET, MANET, DEGAS, RENOIR, MONET, AND RODIN

§ 1

THE French Impressionists were the offspring of the Realists, and to trace their artistic pedigree we must return to painting in France in the middle of the nineteenth century. It was shown in Chapter XIX how the Romantics had rebelled against a false classicism, but only the barest hint was given of how the struggle for liberty and truth in art reached a further stage in the forties by the development of a new group of artists known as the Realists. The leader of this movement and the man who perhaps did more than any other to change the whole modern outlook on art was Gustave Courbet (1819-77).

Courbet

Courbet was the son of a wealthy farmer of Ornans in the Doubs. His father intended him for the law, and with this object sent him to Paris. Arrived there, Courbet threw law to the winds and set about learning the one thing that interested him, painting. A rigid republican, both by education and inclination, Courbet was penetrated by a passionate sympathy for the working classes, and he found the subjects of his pictures in the ordinary life of the people. Further, holding tenaciously that painting, "an art of sight," ought to concern itself with things seen, he was as

opposed to Romanticism as the Romantics had been, in their day, to Classicism. Intensely earnest and serious by nature, Courbet regarded it as mere frivolity to make pictures out of imaginary incidents in poems and romances when all the pageant and pathos of real life waited to be painted. His point of view is made clear by a reply he once made to a patron who desired that he should execute a painting with angels in it for a church. "Angels!" said Courbet, "but I have never seen angels. What I have not seen I cannot paint."

After the revolution of 1848 Courbet's new style of democratic painting had a temporary success. In 1849, before the political reaction had begun, he was awarded a medal at the Salon for his picture, "After Dinner at Ornans." This medal placed him *hors concours,* that is to say, it gave him the right of showing pictures in future Salons without his works having to obtain the approval of the Selecting Jury. Courbet took full advantage of this privilege in the following year, and to the Salon of 1850, in addition to two landscapes and four portraits, he sent two large pictures entitled "The Stone-breakers" and "A Funeral at Ornans" (see illustration facing page 397). The political reaction was in full tide, and the two last pictures raised a storm of fury, because their subjects were supposed to be "dangerously Socialistic." It will be remembered that it was in the Salon of the same year that J. F. Millet showed his first great democratic painting, "The Sower."

"A Funeral at Ornans" became one of the milestones in the progress of modern painting, for, notwithstanding the abuse showered on Courbet, the sincerity of his work appealed to a younger generation of artists. Here was a man who saw life steadily as a whole, and painted life just as he saw it. Each figure in it from the clergy to the mourners, from the grave-digger to the dog, is painted simply but with a truth and power that make it a living thing. Courbet was the first of modern painters to break away from the classic traditions of Italy and turn to-

Photo: Braun.

"LE BON BOCK," BY EDOUARD MANET (1832–83)

A splendid example of the realistic portraiture of the artist's middle period. It represents M. Belot, an engraver, who gave his friend eighty sittings before this lifelike picture was completed. *Bock* is the common term in France for a glass of beer; hence the title may be rendered in English as "A Good Drink."

Photo: Braun.

"A FUNERAL AT ORNANS," BY GUSTAVE COURBET (1819–77)

The Louvre, Paris.

In this great picture of a country funeral, every figure from the clergy to the mourners, from the kneeling grave-digger to the dog, is painted simply and sincerely with a truth and power that gives it life and individuality. Courbet was the founder of modern realistic painting, seeking character rather than formal beauty, and painting real incidents in ordinary life which he had seen with his own eyes.

wards the open-air realism of Velazquez and Frans Hals. He not only had much direct influence on Whistler and on Manet, but pointed out to them the road along which they should travel.

In 1855 Courbet painted a picture which summed up his life of the past seven years. He called it "The Studio of the Painter: a Real Allegory." On the right of this large canvas were the types he had been painting, the beggar, the labourer, the tradesman, the priest, the poacher, the grave-digger; on the left was a group of his personal friends, among them Baudelaire and Proudhon; between the groups was Courbet himself painting a landscape of Ornans.

In an introduction to the catalogue of a private exhibition of his works held in the same year, Courbet explained his endeavour to replace the cult of the ideal by a sentiment of the real:

> To translate the manners, the ideas, and the aspect of my own times according to my perception, to be not only a painter but still more a man, in a word, to create a living art, that is my aim.

During the reign of Napoleon III Courbet became more and more incensed against all authorities political or artistic. The former thought him revolutionary because of his subjects, the latter because his style was based on Dutch and Spanish painting instead of on the accepted Italian masters. Nevertheless, his position as leader of the Realist school was such that in 1870 he was nominated Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. Courbet wrote a violent letter to the Ministry refusing to accept this decoration, and when the Commune broke out in 1871 he took a prominent part in the revolution and became President of the Commission of Fine Arts. Courbet has been much blamed because during his brief presidency he allowed to be pulled down the Column commemorating Napoleon I in the Place Vendôme. This was part of a scheme to efface from Paris all traces of the

Empire, whether First or Third, and though the Column was a historic monument it had no great artistic interest. On the other hand it was Courbet who, during the fury of the Commune, not only preserved intact the art treasures of the Louvre, but with difficulty secured the safety of the Arc de Triomphe. He was full of concern for this monument because of its great artistic qualities, notably the sculpture by Rude with which it was decorated, and he managed to persuade those who urged its demolition that the Arc de Triomphe ought to be spared because it stood not so much for the glory of Napoleon as for the heroism of the revolutionary armies of France.

Still, when the Commune had been suppressed with an iron hand, the good deeds of Courbet during the insurrection were forgotten: the unfortunate artist was arrested in connection with the demolition of the Vendôme Column, condemned to six months' imprisonment and to defray the whole cost—some 400,000 francs—of the reconstruction of the Column. This utterly ruined him, and though Courbet eventually succeeded in crossing the frontier he was broken in health and spirits. He died in exile in 1877.

§ 2

Manet

Manet was the heir of Courbet with this difference, that the temper of his art was more aristocratic. He also built up his pictures by the direct application of planes of colour rather than by working up an underpainting based on linear design and light-and-shade; he also used the blonde palette of Velazquez and Hals, and he also chose his subjects from the life around him; but he painted the people and life of the middle-classes while Courbet had concentrated on the proletariat.

Edouard Manet was born at Paris in 1833. His father was a magistrate and, like Courbet, Manet was originally destined for the bar, but he eventually overcame family opposition, and when

he was about eighteen he was permitted to enter the studio of Couture (1815-79). Thomas Couture was an accomplished artist whose rich coloured paintings were a discreet compromise between romanticism and classicism, but his orthodox instruction appealed little to Manet, who from the beginning desired to observe nature closely and reproduce it according to his own feeling. After travelling in Germany, Austria, and Italy to study the old masters, Manet finally found in the paintings by Velazquez and Goya at the Louvre the answer to all his questionings and aspirations for light and truth. Influenced by these masters and by the example of Courbet, he gradually evolved a new technique which presented modern aspects by modern methods. Observing how one colour melted into another in nature, he declared "There are no lines in Nature," and in his pictures he abandoned the convention of the outline and shaped his forms by a modelling obtained by subtle gradations of tints which fused into one another. The problem of just illumination was to Manet a matter of primary importance. Once when he was asked to point out the principal figure in a group he had painted, he made a reply that has become historic. "The principal person in a picture," said Manet, "is the light."

Manet made his first appearance at the Salon in 1861 with a portrait of himself and his young wife and another painting, "The Spanish Guitar-player." Over both the cry of "Realism" was raised, and Realism was unpopular at the moment, nevertheless the Jury, inspired by Delacroix, gave Manet an Honourable Mention. But during the next two years the partisans of the classical tradition obtained the upper hand again, and Manet was excluded from the Salon of 1863. So many artists of admitted talent, however unpopular, had their works rejected *en bloc* by the Salon jury this year, that the Emperor Napoleon III, inspired by a praiseworthy liberal thought, insisted that these innovators should at least have the right to exhibit together in a special room. Thus there came into being what was known as the *Salon*

des Refusés: among the exhibitors there, in addition to Manet and Whistler, were Alphonse Legros, Fantin Latour (1836-1904), celebrated both as a portraitist and as a painter of flowers, Harpignies, Renoir, Claude Monet, and many others who have since become famous. One of the paintings in this exhibition, a sunset by Claude Monet, entitled "Impressions," excited much laughter among the crowd that came to jeer at the "rejected," and henceforward the custom arose of alluding to the new school of painters as "Impressionists." Originating as a term of derision, the word remained in use, and the painters to whom it was applied adopted it as an official label which would serve, as well as any other, to cover their varied aims.

Prior to the *Salon des Refusés* Edouard Manet had little or no knowledge of Claude Monet, who was seven years his junior, but now the similarity between their names and the abuse showered upon both drew the two men together. Through Monet, Manet came to know Renoir and Sisley, who had been fellow-students with Monet in the studio of Gleyre, Whistler's master, and this group was joined, among others, by two older artists, Camille Pissarro and Degas. As in the case of the Pre-Raphaelites, it was friendship and unjust derision which created the solidarity of the Impressionists, though the individual painters had by no means identical aims. Manet, we now realise, was far more a Realist than an Impressionist, and it is important to remember that he passed as an innovator years before Impressionism existed or was even thought of. It was more than ten years after the *Salon des Refusés* before Manet became influenced by the new ideas of colour evolved by Pissarro, Monet, and Renoir. In his fine portrait "Le Bon Bock" (see illustration facing page 396), painted in 1873, Manet still reveals himself as the heir, not only of Courbet, but of Velazquez, Hals, and Goya. Nothing could be further from the once popular notion of an "Impressionist" picture as a daub hastily put together, than this careful, if unconventional, portrait of his friend the engraver

Photo: by courtesy of "Colour.

"PINE-TREE AT ANTIBES," BY CLAUDE MONET

This view from a promontory on the Riviera is a beautiful example of true impressionist or "luminist" painting, in which the artist uses the radiant hues of the rainbow to get the actual colours of sunshine and small "broken touches" of paint to suggest the vibration of light. Note how full of colour are the shadows, also the decorative balance of the composition, which betrays a hint of Japanese influence.

Belot enjoying a glass of beer. M. Belot gave Manet no less than eighty sittings before this portrait was finished. It is freer than Courbet, with a greater simplifying of planes and values, but it is no revolution, it is a continuation and development of Courbet's realism.

Quite different in style is "A Bar at the Folies-Bergère" (see illustration facing page 412), painted in 1882. We may say at once that the chief difference between the two pictures is in the colour, for—to borrow a term from the wine-list—the colour in "Le Bon Bock" is "still," while that in the "Bar" picture is "sparkling," sparkling especially in the wonderful painting of the bottles and glasses as we may see even in a photograph. Both pictures are magnificent, both are marvellously lifelike, but in the second there is a more searching pursuit of colour, in shadow as well as in light, and a more vivacious statement of its actuality. In a word, it is a typical "Impressionist" picture: and here we may well pause to inquire what is meant by "Impressionism."

§ 3

What is Impressionism?

If we look at all the bottles in "A Bar at the Folies-Bergère" we shall notice that the treatment of detail here is totally different from the treatment of detail, say, in Millais's "Ophelia" (see illustration facing page 308). In this picture Millais looked at each leaf, flower, and branch separately, and set them down separately on his canvas like a sum in addition. But all the bottles in Manet's picture are seen simultaneously in relation to each other: it is a synthesis, not an addition. Impressionism, then, in the first place, is the result of *simultaneous vision* that sees a scene as a whole as opposed to *consecutive vision* that sees nature piece by piece. Let us suppose, for a moment, that we are staying at a house on the banks of the Seine opposite the church at Vernon. Let us suppose that, having arrived there in darkness the previous evening, we jump out of bed in the morning, open the window,

and put out our head to see the view. Monet's picture "The Church at Vernon" (see illustration facing page 409) shows us what we should see *at the first glance;* the glance, that is to say, when we see the scene as a whole, before any detail in it has riveted our attention and caused us unconsciously to alter the focus of our eye in order to see that detail more sharply. Another way of putting the matter is to say that in an Impressionist picture there is only one focus throughout, while in a Pre-Raphaelite picture there is a different focus for every detail. These two methods of painting represent different ways of looking at the world, and neither way is wrong, only whereas the Pre-Raphaelite looks *particularly* at a series of objects, the Impressionist looks *generally* at the whole.

The Science of Colour

This way of viewing a scene broadly, however, is only a part of Impressionism. It was not a new invention, for Velazquez saw and painted figures and groups in a similar way, therefore Impressionists like Whistler and Manet (in his earlier works), who adopted this broad style, were in this respect developing an existing tradition rather than inventing a new one. But a later development of Impressionism, which was a complete innovation, was the new palette they adopted. From the time of Daubigny, who said, "We never paint light enough," the more progressive painters had striven to make the colours in their pictures closer to the actual hues of nature. Delacroix was one of the pioneers in the analysis of colour. When he was in Morocco he wrote in his Journal about the shadows he had seen on the faces of two peasant boys, remarking that while a sallow, yellow-faced boy had *violet* shadows, a red-faced boy had *green* shadows. Again, in the streets of Paris Delacroix noticed a black and yellow cab, and observed that, beside the greenish-yellow, the black took on a tinge of the complementary colour, violet. An advertisement issued by a well-known soap firm will have made many readers

familiar with the phenomenon of complementary colour. The name of the soap was printed in bright red letters on a white paper, and we were asked, after gazing at this steadfastly for a few moments, to look up at a white ceiling, when we should see the name of the soap in *green* letters. Every colour has its complementary, that is to say, an opposing colour is evoked by the action of the human eye after we have been gazing at the said colour; consequently all colours act and react on one another. Delacroix discovered that to obtain the full brilliance of any given hue it should be flanked and supported by its complementary colour. He did not attain to full knowledge; it was left for a later generation to make nicer distinctions and to recognise that if violet is the right complementary for a greenish-yellow, an orange-yellow requires a turquoise blue, and so on.

The nineteenth was a scientific century during which great additions were made to our knowledge of optics. The French scientist Chevreuil wrote a learned book on colour, which was studied with avidity by the younger painters. It became clear to them that colour was not a simple but a very complex matter. For example, we say that grass is green, and green is the *local colour* of grass, that is to say, the colour of grass at close range, when we look down on it at our feet. But grass-covered hills seen at a great distance do not appear green, but *blue*. The green of their local colour is affected by the veil of atmosphere through which we view it in the distance, and the blue we see is an example of *atmospheric colour*. Again, the local colour of snow is white, but everybody who has been to Switzerland is familiar with the "Alpine glow" when the snow-clad peaks of the mountains appear a bright copper colour owing to the rays of the setting sun. This "Alpine glow" is an example of *illumination colour*, and since the colour of sunlight is changing throughout the day, everything in nature is affected by the colour of the light which falls upon it.

The landscape painter, then, who wishes to reproduce the

actual hues of nature, has to consider not only "local colour," but also "atmospheric colour" and "illumination colour," and further take into consideration "complementary colours." One of the most important discoveries made by the later Impressionist painters was that *in the shadows there always appears the complementary colour of the light.* We should ponder on all these things if we wish to realise the full significance of Manet's saying, "The principal person in a picture is the light."

The Impressionist Palette

This new intensive study of colour brought about a new palette and a new technique. For centuries all painting had been based on three primary colours, red, blue, and yellow! but science now taught the painters that though these might be primary colours in *pigment,* they were not primary colours in *light.* The spectroscope and the new science of spectrum-analysis made them familiar with the fact that white light is composed of all the colours of the rainbow, which is the spectrum of sunlight. They learnt that the primary colours of light were green, orange-red, and blue-violet, and that yellow—though a primary in paint—was a secondary in light, because a yellow light can be produced by blending a green light with an orange-red light. On the other hand green, a secondary in paint because it can be produced by mixing yellow with blue pigment, is a primary in light. These discoveries revolutionised their ideas about colour, and the Impressionist painters concluded they could only hope to paint the true colour of sunlight by employing pigments which matched the colours of which sunlight was composed, that is to say, the tints of the rainbow. They discarded black altogether, for, modified by atmosphere and light, they held that a true black did not exist in nature: the darkest colour was indigo, dark green, or a deep violet. They would not use a brown, but set their palettes with indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, red, and violet, the nearest colours they could obtain to the seven of the solar spectrum.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE UMBRELLAS," BY RENOIR (1841–1919)

Tate Gallery, London.

The strange spectacle presented by an array of umbrellas on a rainy day in a public place has here inspired the artist to give one of his most original and ingeniously designed impressions of Parisian life. Renoir excelled in rendering the actual colour of sunshine on human flesh and figures, and this picture is as true to nature's own colouring as it is true to life in its intimate observation of human character and behaviour.

Photo: Braun.

"THE DANCING LESSON," BY DEGAS

A passionate interest in movement and life drew Degas to the study of [illegible] and his pictures of the ballet are not [illegible]. In this comparatively early work he shows us the hard realities [illegible] the aerial spaciousness of the scene as a whole results from his perfect rendering of light and air.

Impressionist Technique

Further, they used these colours with as little mixing as possible. Every amateur in water-colour knows that the more he mixes his paints, the more they lose in brilliancy. The same is true of oil paints. The Impressionists refrained, therefore, as much as possible from mixing colours on their palettes, and applied them pure in minute touches to the canvas. If they wanted to render secondary or tertiary colours, instead of mixing two or three pigments on the palette, they would secure the desired effect by juxtaposed touches of pure colours which, at a certain distance, fused in the eye of the beholder and produced the effect of the tint desired. This device is known as *optical mixture,* because the mixing is done in the spectator's eye. Thus, whereas red and green pigment mixed on a palette will give a dull grey, the Impressionists produced a brilliant luminous grey by speckling a sky, say, with little points of yellow and mauve which at a distance gave the effect of a pearly grey. Similarly the effect of a brilliant brown was given by the juxtaposition of a series of minute touches of green, red, and yellow; and this association of minute touches of three pure colours set up a quivering vibration which had greater luminosity than any streak of brown pigment. It was an endeavour to use paints as if they were coloured lights.

Various names have been given to this technique. It has been called "Divisionism," because by it the tones of secondary and tertiary colours were divided into their constituent elements. It has been called "Pointillism," because the colour was applied to the canvas in points instead of in sweeping brush-strokes. It has been called "Luminism," because the aim of the process is primarily to express the colour of light with all its sparkle and vibration. This last is the best name of all, because it serves to emphasise the new outlook of the new painters. The tendency before the Impressionists was to regard colour from the standpoint of black and white. Thus, in considering a grey, it would have been asked is it a dark grey or a light grey, does it approach

black or white? The Impressionists took quite a different attitude and asked whether it was a bluish grey, or a greenish grey, or a purplish grey, or a reddish grey: in a word, not whether it was light or dark, but to which colour in the solar spectrum it most closely approached.

To the Impressionists shadow was not an absence of light, but light of a different quality and of different value. In their exhaustive research into the true colours of shadows in nature, they conquered the last unknown territory in the domain of Realist Painting.

To sum up, then, it may be said that Impressionist Painting is based on two great principles:

1. *The substitution of a Simultaneous Vision that sees a scene as a whole in place of a Consecutive Vision that sees nature piece by piece.*

2. *The substitution of a Chiaroscuro based on the colours of the solar spectrum for a Chiaroscuro based on Black and White.*

This new technique, with all the research and experiment which it implies, was not the invention of one man, but the outcome of the life studies of a whole group of men. Most prominent among those who brought Impressionist painting to perfection in theory and practice were Camille Pissarro, Claude Monet, and Auguste Renoir.

§ 4

Camille Pissarro (1830-1903) was born at St. Thomas in the Danish West Indies and came to Paris with his parents when he was twenty-five. He became a pupil of Corot, and his earlier works show the influence of Corot as regards style and colour and of Millet in subject and drawing. He was the eldest of the Impressionists, being two years older than Manet, but throughout his life Pissarro was an ardent student, never ceasing to investigate and experiment, always ready to listen to the theories and

to observe the practice of a junior who claimed to have discovered a new truth. Though darker in colour than his later work, a small landscape now in the Musée des Arts Decoratifs at Paris, painted by Pissarro in 1869, shows that even at this time he was experimenting in the division of tones. Unfortunately nearly all the earlier paintings of Camille Pissarro are lost, for his home and studio were in the line of approach of the destroying Prussians in 1870. Owing to the war Pissarro and Monet came to London in 1871, and there they saw the later paintings of Turner, which confirmed their ideas about colour and encouraged them to paint brighter and still brighter.

Monet

Claude Monet was ten years younger than Pissarro. Though born in 1840 at Paris, where his father was a merchant, he spent much of his boyhood at Havre, where he learnt a good deal about painting from Boudin. After completing his military service in Algeria, Monet returned to Paris and entered the studio of Gleyre. Here he formed a close friendship with two fellow-students, Renoir and Sisley, and became acquainted later with Manet as has already been related. Monet's earliest paintings, however, are not lighter than those by Boudin and Corot, and he was first influenced by these and others of the Barbizon School.

Renoir

Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) was born at Limoges, where his father was a tailor in a small way of business, and at the age of thirteen young Auguste began to earn his living as a painter on porcelain. This early apprenticeship left a certain trace on his art which was always decorative and even elegiac in spite of its later realism. In time Renoir saved up enough money to go to Paris and became a pupil of Gleyre, but while his friends were landscapists Renoir was first and foremost a figure-painter.

Alfred Sisley (1839-99) was born in Paris of English

parents, and his development was parallel to that of Monet, whose work his own pictures closely resemble. We may say that all these young men, together with Pissarro, were discontented with the state of painting before 1870. They looked at their pictures and they looked at nature; but while they realised how far their painting fell short of their intention they had not yet found the way to secure greater brilliancy and truth. That way was discovered during the seventies, after Pissarro and Monet had seen the Turners in London and returned to Paris. It is possible to exaggerate the influence of Turner on the new movement, for it had really begun earlier with Delacroix, but the sight of the Turners undoubtedly hastened its accomplishment as far as Pissarro and Monet are concerned. Not the beginning of Impressionism, but the first public revelation of Impressionism, was an exhibition held at Nadar's galleries, Boulevard des Capucines, in 1874. Here were gathered together works by many of the "rejected" of 1863, Manet being the best known of them and generally considered the leader of the movement, and also works by new adherents to Impressionist doctrine. The exhibition provoked much controversy, but it was sufficiently talked about to be something of a success, and thereafter for several years a *Salon des Impressionists* was an annual event. But in 1874 the science of colour was still in its infancy, and if the exhibitors were "Impressionists" they were not all "luminists." Even Renoir's famous picture of people in a theatre-box, painted about this time, is sombre in colour, in comparison with the scintillating canvases he was to paint later.

Degas

Another contributor to this exhibition, whose picture, "The Dancing Lesson" (see illustration facing page 405), attracted much attention, was Degas. Friendship with Manet drew Degas into this circle, though he never entirely accepted all the principles of Impressionism. Edgar Hilaire Germain Degas (1834-1917)

Photo: Braun.

"A DANCER ON THE STAGE," BY DEGAS (1834–1917)

Pastel in the Luxembourg.

This pastel, which gives a wonderful impression of a ballet-dancer almost floating into the brilliant light of the stage from the obscurity of the "wings," should be compared with the earlier painting by the same artist preceding. It is miraculous in its suggestion of quivering movement.

Photo: Braun.

"THE CHURCH AT VERNON," BY MONET (*b.* 1840)

A typical landscape by this famous Impressionist showing his immediate concern with a fugitive effect of light. All details in the landscape are subordinated to the illumination which falls upon them. Even deprived of their magical colour, the reflections in the water show the vibration of light, the sense of movement and life, obtained by Monet's method of painting with broken touches.

was born in Paris, the son of a banker, and, like Courbet and Manet, was originally destined for a legal career. In 1855, however, he entered the École des Beaux Arts and also studied under Lamothe, a pupil of Ingres. All his life Degas, who was brought up in the classical tradition, had the deepest veneration for Ingres. He was also an admirer of Holbein and Clouet, whose pictures he copied. In 1856 he went to Rome and remained two years in Italy studying the work of the early Italian masters. Returning to Paris, he began as an historical painter, his last picture in this style being "A Scene of War in the Middle Ages," shown in the Salon of 1865. But about this time he came into contact with Manet, and through him with Pissarro, Monet, Renoir, and others who frequented the Café Guerbois in the Batignolles, and there endlessly discussed their artistic aims and ideals. Because of this centre for social intercourse the Impressionist group was at one time nicknamed "The School of Batignolles." Owing to the powerful new influences surrounding him, Degas was led to abandon his historical works and devote himself to painting scenes of modern life. Always intensely interested in the rendering of movement, Degas was first attracted to subjects he found on the race-course, one of the earliest successes in his new manner being "A Carriage at the Races." He also painted washerwomen at their work, scenes in cafés and in theatres, and revealed himself as an artist passionately absorbed in the spectacle of city life, though with rather a cynical outlook. Degas was the greatest draughtsman among the Impressionists, and in his pictures of modern life he relied upon line more than any other of the friends with whom he exhibited. Like Whistler he was much influenced by Japanese colour-prints, which gave him new ideas of pattern and design.

After the Franco-Prussian war, during which he served in the artillery, Degas concentrated on the Ballet, a subject for which he became famous throughout the world and which occupied his best attention for twenty years. In these works Degas

stands revealed as an uncompromising Realist. What he usually shows us is not the glamour and illusion of the Ballet from the spectator's standpoint; Degas gets behind the scenes and exposes the work and discipline which lie behind this artificial fairyland; he strips the dancers of their tinsel, compelling us to see that they are not lovely young nymphs, but plain, tired, hard-worked women, often middle-aged. The beauty of his pictures is to be found not in any prettiness of his models, but in the lighting, the arrangement, the drawing, and later, in the colour, in the convincing truth of his vision, and in the decorative charm of his design. In the later seventies and thenceforward, Degas worked more frequently in pastel than in oils, and in these later pastels he adopts the prismatic hues of Luminism, based on the rainbow colours of the solar spectrum, so that these works, in addition to their masterly drawing and decorative design, have the additional beauty of shimmering, iridescent colour. A superb example of his later style is the pastel "A Dancer on the Stage" (see illustration facing page 408) in the Luxembourg, Paris. Here, for once in a way, Degas forgets his cynicism and shows us the magical glamour of a *première danseuse* quivering with movement, bathed with light, and happy apparently in her moment of success. After 1886 Degas retired almost completely from the public eye, living the life of a recluse on a fifth-floor in Montmartre; refusing for the most part to sell his works or even to show them to collectors, though his fame continually increased and the value of his earlier works rose to sensational prices. Before his death his picture "Dancers at the Bar," which he had originally sold for £20, was bought by an American collector for £17,400, this being the record price obtained to date at public auction for a picture by any living artist. But Degas was equally contemptuous of praise or criticism, and to the end he declined all honours.

Claude Monet, who is still alive, has also seen pictures he sold for £4 bring thousands of pounds in America and elsewhere.

Devoting himself to the painting of landscapes in bright sunlight, he has carried the pitch of painting into a higher key than any artist before him had done. "Pine-Tree at Antibes" (see Colour-Plate) is a beautiful example of his style at its maturity; radiant colours are laid side by side in small broken touches to suggest the vibration of light, while the decorative arrangement shows that Monet also has taken hints for design from the artists of Japan. Light is always the "principal person" in Monet's landscape, and since he is always aiming at seizing a fugitive effect, he has insisted on consistency of illumination at particular hours of the day and season. With this object he adopted since the early eighties a habit of painting the same subject under different conditions of light. He would set out early in the morning with a carriage load of canvases, and arriving at his destination he would start his day's work, changing his canvas every couple of hours as the light changed. In this way he painted a series of views, all of the same subject, but all different in colour and lighting. Among the most famous of these series are those known as "Haystacks," "The Poplars," "The Thames at Waterloo Bridge," "Rouen Cathedral," and "Water-lilies," the last being a scene in his own riverside garden at Giverny. When he was a young man M. Monet once said, "I want to paint as a bird sings," and all his pictures have this delicious lyrical quality. While he adopted the rainbow palette and the technique of the small touch —"the procedure by the touch" as it is called in France—Monet has never been dogmatic in his use of divisionism.

The elaboration of Divisionism into a rigid scientific theory of painting was the work principally of two younger men, Georges Seurat (1859-91) and the living artist Paul Signac, born at Paris in 1863. But for his early death Seurat, who was a genius in design as well as a great colourist, would have obtained a foremost place in modern art. It was Seurat about 1880 who definitely established the superiority, for the purposes of brilliance and intensity, of "optical blending" to actual blending on

the palette. The division of tones, which was never more than a convenience to painters like Monet and Sisley, became a law not to be departed from in the work of Seurat and Signac. This new scientific development of Impressionism became known as "Neo-Impressionism." For a time Pissarro also practised this method of divisionism with scrupulous exactness, but eventually he adopted a broader and freer manner, though still retaining the general principle of divided colour. In addition to Seurat and Signac the chief exponents of Neo-Impressionism have been Henri-Edmond Cross (1856-1910) and the living Belgian painter Théo van Rysselberg. This method of painting and the scientific theories on which it is based are fully described in M. Paul Signac's book *D'Eugène Delacroix au Néo-Impressionisme* (Paris, 1898).

§ 5

French Sculpture

By the first principle of Impressionism, the substitution of simultaneous for consecutive vision, sculpture was affected as well as painting. From the time of Louis XIV France had always had talented and accomplished sculptors at her command, but it was not till the era of Impressionism that she produced a great world sculptor whose name was worthily coupled with that of Michael Angelo. Among the earlier French sculptors Jean Baptiste Pigalle (1714-85) was a pioneer of Realism, his vigorous and fertile imagination giving his sculpture a certain accent of life and originality. Jean Antoine Houdon (1741-1828), his pupil, was famous for the power and truth of his portrait busts; François Rude (1784-1855) was a still greater liberator of French sculpture from a cramping classicism which slavishly imitated the antique. His famous group "Le Départ des Volontaires de 1790" on the Arc de Triomphe shows Rude's realism and the nobility of his expression of patriotic feeling. Antoine Louis Barye (1796-1875), both painter and sculptor, the contemporary and

Photo: Braun.

"A BAR AT THE FOLIES-BERGÈRE," BY MANET

Painted the year before he died, this picture of a bar in a popular Parisian music-hall shows the final style of an artist who said "The principal person in a picture is the light." Though crowded with glittering details all sparkling with reflected lights, the picture is a true impression of a scene viewed "steadily and as a whole."

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST," BY RODIN (1840–1917)
South Kensington Museum, London.

Falsely accused of having taken a cast from life and shown it as an original statue, Rodin modelled this heroic figure larger than life to prove his ability in modelling. It was first intended to portray nothing more than "A Man Walking," but while he was working on it Octave Mirbeau told the sculptor it was an ideal St. John, and Rodin accepted the title.

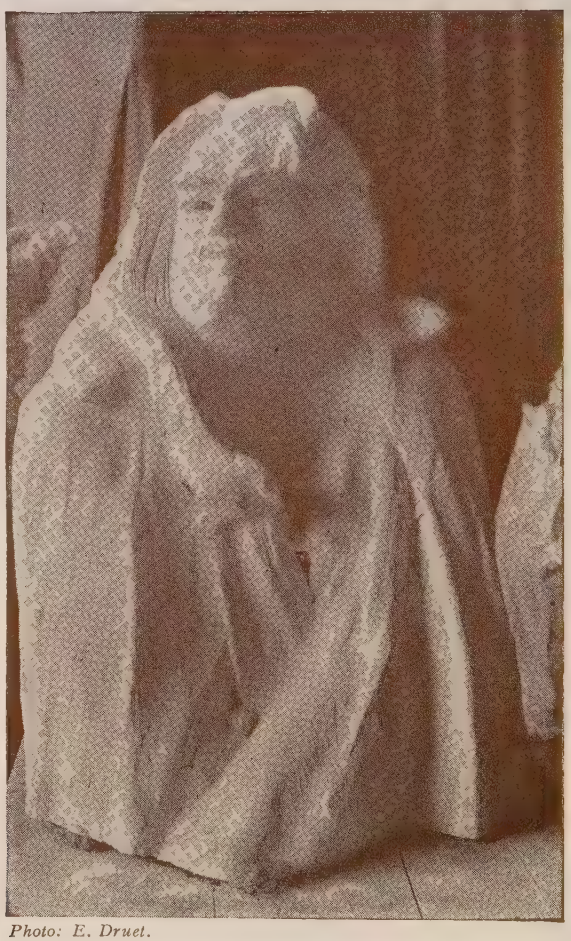

Photo: E. Druet.

BALZAC, BY RODIN

The upper part of Rodin's statue of Balzac which caused a sensation in the Salon of 1898. This powerful rendering of the great novelist, loosely wrapped in his dressing gown, shows the extreme limit of impressionism in sculpture.

friend of the Barbizon landscape painters, achieved high distinction by his lifelike sculpture of animals, and his small bronzes are still eagerly sought after by collectors.

Rodin

It was a pupil of Barye, an even greater modeller than himself, who was to achieve the greatest fame won by any sculptor since Michael Angelo. Auguste Rodin was born at Paris in the same year as Monet, 1840. He was of humble origin and in his youth had to earn his living by working in a mason's yard, where he became familiar with the material he was destined to master. For years his only studio was his humble bedroom, and it was here that he modelled his early bust, "The Man with the Broken Nose," which when exhibited at the Salon was acknowledged to be a masterpiece of realism, modelled with a power and truth unknown for generations. When his beautiful statue "The Age of Bronze," now in the Luxembourg, was exhibited in the Salon of 1877, the authorities were so astonished by its masterly modelling that the sculptor was accused of having taken a cast from life. To prove the falsehood of this accusation Rodin made his next statue, "St. John the Baptist" (see illustration facing this page), rather more than life-size, and again the modelling was miraculous in its perfection. If the "Age of Youth" with its polished rendering of the graceful form of adolescence reminds us of the best Greek sculpture, this second powerful and lifelike rendering of a mature man is comparable to the figures by the master-sculptors of the Renaissance.

It has often been asked why a statue by Rodin is different from any other statue, and the explanation is simple; instead of copying Greek sculpture as others had done, Rodin did as the Greeks did, he went direct to Nature. "Everything," he said, "is contained in Nature, and when the artist follows Nature he gets everything." Rodin taught his contemporaries that distinction in sculpture is obtained, not by selecting a certain type of figure,

but by the gift and art of modelling. "Sculpture," he once said, "is the art of the hole and the lump," and as he went on he proved that in order to present a true appearance of form it was necessary sometimes to fashion the "holes" and "lumps," not exactly as they existed in anatomy, but as they appeared to the human eye. In this way Rodin introduced impressionism into sculpture, showing us heads and figures as they appeared to the human eye enveloped in atmosphere and bathed in light. His famous monument "The Citizens of Calais" is remarkable, not only for the poignant expression of the different characters of the various figures, but also for the truth of atmosphere and movement in this procession winding its way along slowly and sadly. These are no graveyard figures but living men moving and breathing in the air that surrounds them. Commemorating an historic incident when France and England were at war, this monument has become a happy and lasting token of the *Entente Cordiale,* for in addition to the monument at Calais a replica of it has been erected on the Victoria Embankment, London, close to the House of Lords, thanks to the generosity of English admirers of the French sculptor.

The rugged technique by which Rodin obtained his wonderful effects of atmospheric reality was long in establishing itself in public favour, yet there have been few sculptors animated with a more profound respect for the material of their art. It was Rodin's love of marble itself which led to a new development of his art, in which he would leave rough the matrix from which his sculpture was hewn, so that delicate heads and figures seemed to grow like flowers out of the marble of their origin. A memorable example of his work in this style is "Thought," in which a feminine head of exquisite refinement and spirituality emerges from a rough-hewn block of marble.

Rodin reached his extreme limit of impressionism in sculpture with his colossal statue of "Balzac" (see illustration facing page 413), which, when exhibited in the New Salon of 1898,

threw the world of art into a condition bordering upon frenzy. The man who twenty years before had been declared too skilful to be genuine, was now accused of not knowing the elements of his craft. Yet the sublime simplicity of this figure loosely wrapped in a dressing-gown, with the upturned face, the lion-maned head of genius, soaring, as it were, to heaven, revealed Rodin at his highest not only as a master of impressionist modelling, but also as a psychologist who could conceive and create an unforgettable expression of the very soul of genius.

XXIII

POST-IMPRESSIONISM, CUBISM, AND FUTURISM

POST-IMPRESSIONISM, CUBISM, AND FUTURISM

THE ART OF CÉZANNE, VAN GOGH, GAUGUIN, MATISSE, AND PICASSO

§ 1

WHAT is "Post-Impressionism"? This term was invented by the English painter and art-critic, Mr. Roger Fry, to cover various art-movements which came *after* Impressionism, and since some of these movements have been developments of Impressionism while others have been a reaction from it, confusion can only be avoided by considering separately the principal movements and the artists associated with them.

The reader of this OUTLINE will have observed that, from the days of Giotto down to the close of the nineteenth century, the development of the main stream of European painting was in the direction of a more perfect representation of the appearances of natural forms. In the nineteenth century two causes contributed to change the direction of painting. One was the invention of photography, which set painters wondering what part the representative element really played in a picture; the other was the new colour-science of the Impressionists, who seemed to have pushed truth of representation to a point where further developments were impossible. Ambitious painters sighed, like Alexander, for new worlds to conquer: the problems of foreshortening, of perspective, of the true colour of shadows, all had been solved triumphantly by their predecessors. What was there left to be done by a painter who did not wish to imitate

the work of any other artist? It was inevitable that a reaction should set in. Painting, according to the Neo-Impressionist formulas described in the last chapter, had become, as we have seen, a highly complicated and scientific business. A new generation began to argue that, after all, painting was not a science but an art, and that its primary function was not the accurate representation of nature but the expression of an emotion. A fresh start was made in a new direction. Emphasis was now to be laid on expressing an idea rather than on rendering appearances, and it was held that by reducing the facts of phenomena to a minimum the idea might be able to shine forth more brightly. The vessel of art having become overloaded, it was thought advisable to lighten the ship by throwing some of the cargo overboard.

Daumier

Already there had been a forerunner in this direction. Honoré Daumier (1808–79), though chiefly known to his contemporaries as a pungent caricaturist and lithographer, also executed oil-paintings which have become highly esteemed since his death. These pictures, sometimes satirising the Law Courts whose "justice" roused him to fury, often based on some illuminating incident in the history of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, were unlike any other pictures of his time, and always expressed an idea with a maximum of intellectual force and a minimum of colour and pictorial means.

> Half a century before his time, he had the courage to eliminate trappings and redundancies from his painting, and to give us plastic conceptions of rugged simplicity. In so doing he anticipated the most interesting and fruitful of modern pictorial movements.

Cézanne

It was from the heart of Impressionism itself that the most powerful reaction began, and the artist usually regarded now as the "Father of Post-Impressionism" is Paul Cézanne (1839–

Photo: E. Druet.

"PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST," BY PAUL CÉZANNE (1839–1906)

This is the painter who said: "I wish to make of Impressionism something solid and enduring, like the art of the Old Masters." His rugged painting of himself in middle age gives us an impression of substance and weight which proves that the artist has achieved his object.

Photo: E. Lruet.

"THE ARTIST WITH A PIPE," BY VINCENT VAN GOGH (1853–90)

This haunting portrait of himself was painted by Van Gogh after he had cut off his right ear in a fit of frenzy; hence the bandage round his head. The face, compared with the earlier portrait (see Colour-Plate), betrays the tragedy of the artist's life, but the extraordinary vitality and power of the painting show that after recovering from his first mental breakdown Van Gogh's eyes were as keen and his hand as sure as ever they had been in the past.

1906), who during his lifetime exhibited with the Impressionists and was long thought to be one of them. But though the friend and companion of Pissarro, Renoir, and Monet, Cézanne differed from them in many ways. To begin with, he was a southerner, born at Aix in Provence, while all the others belonged to northern France; secondly, while accepting their colour theories, he never wholly adopted in practice their prismatic palette; thirdly, while they were primarily occupied with registering fugitive effects of light, he was always most concerned with eternal verities. His aim is best explained in his own words: "I wish to make of Impressionism something solid and durable, like the art of the Old Masters."

If we look at his landscapes (see illustrations facing pages 425 and 426) or his "Card Players" (see illustration facing page 424) or his portrait of himself (see illustration facing page 420), we do not think first of the light by which these things are seen, but rather of the weight, density, and solidity of the forms depicted. The art of Cézanne is simpler and less complicated than that of Monet and Pissarro; his analysis of colour is more summary, his expression ruder and more forcible. His colour is entirely his own, and the prevalence of browns in his pictures itself separates him from the other Impressionists; but this brown with him is not a convention, it is true to the colour of the sun-scorched landscape of his home, of the South of France, in which he chiefly worked. His paintings may seem clumsy in handling beside the delicate work of Renoir and Sisley, but by reason of his whole-hearted sincerity and honesty of purpose they make a deep and strong impression. Cézanne was not a conscious revolutionary; his pronounced style was the result of a strong, incorruptibly honest mind struggling to express what his eye could see without any preconceived ideas as to the manner of expression. His private life was simple and uneventful, devoted to unremitting toil which was never recognised or honoured. After studying in Paris he returned to the

South of France, where he lived and married on an allowance of £12 a month made him by his father, a banker. After his father's death he inherited a share of his fortune, but made little change in his manner of living. He did not paint to make money, but to learn more about nature and life, and to express what he felt vaguely in his soul. It is related of him that after he had finished a study out-of-doors, he would often leave his painting against the nearest bush. With the last brush-stroke, his interest in the painting ceased; he had done all he could, and it was his wife who surreptitiously followed in his footsteps and garnered in the canvases so difficult at that time to sell.

Of Cézanne it may truly be said that he did not paint to live, but lived to paint, and owing to his absorption in the act of painting, and his consequent detachment from life, he tended to paint human beings as if they were still-life. So it comes about that some of Cézanne's most impressive paintings are simple pictures of still-life. In his work, as M. Duret has pointed out, "a few apples and a napkin on a table assume a kind of grandeur, in the same degree as a human head or a landscape with sea." In painting fruit Cézanne seemed able to suggest the tremendous power of Nature, so that pears and apples spread idly on a dinner-table become a revelation of the hidden forces of Nature which bring fruits to birth. It is only now and again in his figure-paintings that we get a glimpse of the passion for humanity which warms the work of a Rembrandt.

Van Gogh

This quality, however, is abundantly present in the work of his younger contemporary, Vincent Van Gogh (1853–90), who exclaimed in one of his letters, "I want to paint humanity, humanity, and again humanity." A Dutchman by birth, Van Gogh was slow to find his true vocation, and he was close on thirty before he began painting. His brief life is full of romance and pathos. Always of a fanatical temper, and the son of a

Lutheran pastor, Vincent began to earn his living as assistant to an art-dealer, but soon shocked his employers by his habit of quoting the Bible to prospective purchasers and pouring forth passionate sermons if they showed signs of purchasing pictures which he considered to be trivial and unworthy. For a few months he was a schoolmaster in England, but in 1877 he returned to Amsterdam purposing to become a clergyman. He grew impatient in the dry atmosphere of a theological college; and set out as a missionary to the mining district of Borinage in Belgium. Here his ardent sympathies with the hardships of the workers soon got him into trouble with the authorities; he gave away all that he had with reckless generosity, and nearly starving himself he began to relieve his emotions by drawing the people he could not help or comfort. Henceforward art claimed him, and though he had no prospect of being able to support himself in this way, he was encouraged to persevere, and entirely supported by his brother Theo, who had a good position in Paris. At first Van Gogh took Millet for his model, but after he had joined his brother at Paris in 1886 he was influenced by Pissarro and Seurat and adhered to the neo-Impressionist ideals of painting. But in adopting their palette and technique Van Gogh showed his own individuality by using for the separation of colour, not points or patches, but fine lines of pigment, lines whipped on with extraordinary nervous force and passion. His colour touches are so alive that they have not inaptly been described as "wriggling little snakes." His portrait of himself with a beard (see Colour-Plate) shows his style of painting soon after he had learnt the secrets of Impressionism and also reveals his own peculiar character. Van Gogh was not the inventor of a new technique; but he rapidly developed a distinctive style of his own, remarkable for its vehemence of attack. "He was the most passionate of painters, and the extraordinary intensity of his vivid impressions may be likened to our vision of things seen momentarily in the duration of a lightning flash."

From Paris Van Gogh went to Arles in the South of France, where he exposed himself to the risks of sunstroke by frequently painting in blazing sunshine without any head covering. A curious incident made public the fact that he was becoming abnormal. Teasing him for a present a girl in a café once playfully said to him, "Well, if you can't give me anything else, give me one of your big ears." Shortly before Christmas this little waitress, whom the artist admired, was horrified to receive a parcel which was found to contain a freshly severed human ear. Van Gogh was found in bed with his head bleeding and with raging brain fever. Subsequently he was taken to an asylum, but his portrait of himself with a cap on his head and a pipe in his mouth (see illustration facing page 421), painted after this breakdown, proves that his hand had not lost its steadiness nor his eye its power to see essentials with brilliant intensity.

In the summer of 1889 he was well enough to leave Arles, and after a short stay in Paris, his brother arranged for him to live in the house of a doctor at Auvers-sur-Oise. Van Gogh appeared to be in the best of health and spirits, and there is no doubt that he fought bravely against the clouds which threatened his keen intellect. But the day came when he felt himself to be a doomed man with nothing but mental darkness ahead, and on July 28, 1890, in a fit of depression he shot himself fatally. The fact that his mind eventually became unhinged, so that some of the pictures of his last years betray an abnormal vision, does not invalidate the splendid sanity of the bulk of Van Gogh's productions. Technically Van Gogh got his modelling by sweeping contours, instead of by a series of petty planes, and so gave weight to objects while cleanly preserving their silhouettes as co-ordinated parts of a decorative design. We are impressed by his strength, as we are by that of Cézanne; but it is not physical strength alone, but also moral force. His colour is of a high order and pitch, showing a fine sensibility for the splendour of pigment,

Photo: E. Druet.

"THE CARD PLAYERS," BY PAUL CÉZANNE

The Louvre, Paris.

A new phase of Impressionism is seen in this homely picture of two villagers playing cards in a rustic café. Light is no longer the "principal person" in the picture, for though the illumination is just, the sense of space and air admirably preserved, and the figures generalised and broadly treated, our interest is concentrated on the two men whose forms and characters are presented with a monumental simplicity and grandeur. This is not an effect of light, but a fragment of life.

Photo: E. Druet.

"LANDSCAPE WITH BRIDGE," BY PAUL CÉZANNE

Convincing in its quiet beauty and truth, this placid river-scene shows Cézanne at his best as a landscape painter. Irrelevant details are suppressed and the essentials of the scene are presented with a vigour and simplicity which stamp the picture indelibly on our memory. Even deprived of colour we feel the wetness of the water in which the buildings, trees, and sky are reflected.

Photo: E. Druet.

"THE PRISON YARD," BY VINCENT VAN GOGH

The masterpiece of an artist who once exclaimed, "I want to paint humanity, humanity, and again humanity." In this extraordinarily vivid impression of convicts taking their monotonous exercise in a prison-yard, Van Gogh compels us to recognise the tragic dreariness of imprisonment and his own compassionate pity for outcasts of society who, whatever they may have done, are still human beings, doomed to feel and suffer.

Photo: E. Druet.

"TWO TAHITIANS," BY PAUL GAUGUIN (1848–1903)

Convinced that modern European civilisation was diseased and unhealthy, Gauguin sailed to the Pacific to paint a primitive people in a primitive style. This picture of two natives of Tahiti is a typical example of the decorative simplicity and imaginative charm which distinguish his later works.

but Van Gogh was too seriously absorbed in life and humanity for his paintings ever to degenerate into mere decorations. One of the pictures in which he most completely expressed himself was "The Prison Yard" (see illustration facing page 424), in which he conjures up with forcible economy the tragic aspect of these prisoners pacing their monotonous round, makes the high walls eloquent of the impossibility of escape, and without a touch of sentimentality contrives to express his compassionate pity for these dregs of humanity who are yet "men and brothers."

§ 2

Gauguin

Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) also learnt painting from Camille Pissarro, whose style he copied closely in his early work, but at heart he was never a realist. His father was a Breton, but his mother was a Peruvian Creole, and a passion for the tropics was in his blood. As a boy he ran away and went to sea, but after several voyages in various parts of the world he returned to Paris and entered business life. One day in a shop window he saw some pictures which brought back memories of the light and colour he had seen in the Tropics; he made inquiries as to the artists, and so became acquainted with Pissarro. Gauguin was thirty at this time, and though he began painting now as an amateur, it was not till two years later, in 1880, that he began to exhibit, and another year passed before he decided to give all his time to art. Gauguin soon broke away from the dogmas of the neo-Impressionists—though his debt to them is confessed in the splendour of his colour—and for a time he was influenced by Cézanne; this influence showing itself in a tendency towards simplification. Gauguin made certain innovations of his own, he deliberately simplified forms and reintroduced the fashion of binding them with heavy dark outlines, and while his style grew more decorative his subjects became more imaginative.

In one of his letters Van Gogh records that while Gauguin was living with him at Arles he (Van Gogh) was for a while "led into working from imagination."

The association of Gauguin and Van Gogh was unfortunate, for their aims and temperaments were too distinct to mingle with ease. Van Gogh was all humility, Gauguin was proud and haughty, and though the warm-hearted Dutchman venerated his friend, the latter's cold cynicism often got on his nerves and contributed to his depression. Van Gogh wanted to devote his life to suffering humanity; Gauguin wanted to forget the suffering and dwell in an "enchanted land." After Van Gogh's mental collapse at Arles, Gauguin went to Brittany and established himself at Pont Aven, where he found "big, simple mortals and an unspoiled nature." But even rural France was too sophisticated for a man whose romantic temperament found its ideal among the unspoilt barbarians of the Pacific. In 1891 Gauguin sailed for Tahiti, where he fulfilled his intention to paint a primitive folk in a primitive style. Admitting the technical interest and decorative merit of Gauguin's Brittany pictures, it remains doubtful whether he would have been so great a figure in modern art had he not, like R. L. Stevenson, been fascinated by the life and manners of the Kanakas. His Tahitian pictures with their exotic subjects made a wide appeal to the popular imagination, though they did not become generally known till after the artist's death in 1903. But if he complained bitterly at the lack of purchasers for his pictures, Gauguin delighted in his new home and never regretted having left Europe. "I have escaped everything that is artificial, conventional, customary. I am entering into truth, into Nature." Nevertheless he idealised the nature he found in the Pacific; he dwelt in a land of dreams and his pictures were charming conventions. When a literary friend in Paris quarrelled with his ideal, Gauguin replied: "Your civilisation is your disease, my barbarism is my restoration to health."

Photo: E. Druet.

"LANDSCAPE IN PROVENCE," BY PAUL CÉZANNE

This essentially naturalistic painting of a scene in Southern France contains the germs of Cubism, for in his desire to give an effect of solidity and substance to houses and land, Cézanne here emphasises cubic forms and tends to sharpen curves into angles.

"HEAD OF A WOMAN," BY HENRI MATISSE

Leader of a movement to simplify modern painting, M. Matisse in this striking picture secures a powerful effect with a rigid economy of means A few heavy lines are sufficient to express a face which whether we like it or not, we shall not easily forget

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, then, Gauguin appeared to Paris, not only as the inventor of a new style of picture, but also as the protagonist of a new mental attitude towards life and art. At that period there was a certain lassitude among the highly cultured expressed by the term *fin de siècle*—and it was not difficult to make out a case for regarding modern civilisation as a disease. There is much in city-life that is repugnant to some temperaments, and the yearning for simplicity among artists had its parallel in the "back-to-the-land" movement in politics. The argument put forward by a new generation of artists was this: "If modern life is diseased, modern art must be diseased also. We can only restore art to health by starting it afresh like children or savages." Thus began the reaction against the complexity of neo-Impressionist painting, and this movement, chiefly influenced by the example of Gauguin, gave birth to a group of painters known in Paris as the *fauves* (i.e. "the wild beasts"). This Fauviste movement was an extreme emotional reaction against the cold intellectual tendencies of hyper-scientific painting. In so far as these "wild-beast" painters sought to make painting simpler and less complicated, it may be argued that they were moving in a right direction. A similar reaction in England, fifty years earlier, had led Holman Hunt and Millais to go back to the painters before Raphael for qualities of line and colour which they thought desirable. But the French painters, in their rage against civilisation, went much further back: one by one all the Old Masters were swept away by revolutionaries who sought inspiration from the rudimentary art of savages and barbarians. Forcible, childlike scrawls began to appear in Paris exhibitions, and these paintings were based not so much on any new view of nature as on the savage art of Polynesia and Central Africa. The rough-hewn intensity of negro carvings excited jaded minds which were satiated with the plastic perfection of the sculpture of Michael Angelo.

Matisse

The passion for simplicity and the desire to secure a maximum of expression with a minimum of means—which are the chief virtues of the Fauves—are found in the highest degree in the work of Henri Matisse, who is generally regarded as the leading exponent of this school. Born in the North of France in 1869, Matisse as a young man made a great reputation among connoisseurs by the extraordinary power of his drawing. Beginning as an almost academic draughtsman, influenced at first by Impressionism and then by Gauguin, painting landscapes, figures, and still-life, the art of Matisse has passed through a number of phases, each of which has had offshoots in a band of imitators. If Gauguin has been the most lasting influence, Matisse is in no sense an imitator of this master. Though he retained the high-keyed Impressionist palette of bright, clean colours, Matisse abandoned the mosaic method of painting, using a sweeping brush and large planes of colour to fill in the masses of what are essentially linear designs. Many of his drawings are wonderful in their summary expression of form and movement, but while in his pictures we admire the masterly sureness and simplicity of his drawing, we are often bewildered by his wilful distortion of natural form.

One of his defenders has sought to explain that Matisse exaggerates deformity in a model by a temperamental necessity which pushes him to affirm a truth without discretion to the point of paradox. Most people will find it difficult to accept a passion for realism as a reasonable explanation why an artist should present the calf of a leg as having a greater circumference than a thigh! On the other hand, decorative intent is patent in all the pictures of Matisse, and we frequently find that distortions of form are used to help and emphasise the rhythm and equilibrium of the linear pattern; accordingly it seems more reasonable to conclude that these distortions are wilful, not accidental, and that the painter subordinates natural representation to formal design,

Photo: E. Druet.

"MOTHER AND CHILD," BY PABLO PICASSO

It seems remarkable that the painter of this picture should have been one of the founders of Cubism and author of the strange paintings on the following page. This picture, with its refined draughtsmanship, shows the normality of Picasso's art before his passion for novelty and experiment led him to the invention of Cubism.

Photo: Emmett.

"A LADY AND HER DOG," BY GIACOMO BALLA

An example of a Futurist painting in which an endeavour is made to represent movement by showing in various positions the moving paws and tail of the dog, the swing of his chain, and the step of his owner's feet. Here painting attempts to rival and surpass the achievements of the rapid-motion camera.

Photo: E. Druet.

"HEAD OF A LADY IN A MANTILLA," BY PABLO PICASSO

An example of the first phase of Cubism in which all curved lines are eliminated in order to give greater "strength" to a picture, and human features are consequently cut up into geometrical forms. Executed at a period when primitive and savage art was idolised by advanced artists, this head looks less like a painting than a wood figure carved by a savage with a blunt instrument.

Photo: E. Druet.

"PORTRAIT OF M. KAHNWEILER," BY PABLO PICASSO

An example of the second phase of Cubism when, owing to the arbitrary shuffling of the geometrical shapes into which natural forms had already been cut up, only infinitesimal fragments of objects can be identified by the uninitiated. In this "puzzle-picture" a glimpse of a waistcoat with watch-chain can be seen in the centre, above it are indications of an eye, nose, and ear, but the rest of M. Kahnweiler appears to be smothered under the papers and files of his office.

and desires us to admire his pictures, not because they are "true," but because he has created a pattern of line and colour which should appeal to pure æsthetic sensibilities. Matisse is historically important, therefore, as a pioneer of the doctrine that mere "actuality" is unimportant to pictorial art. He may also be regarded as the introducer of "shock tactics" into art. Even if we dislike his pictures we find it difficult to forget them, because they make so forcible an impact on our vision. His "Head of a Woman" (see illustration facing page 427) is an example of the powerful effect he achieves with the utmost simplicity and economy of means.

§ 3

The Origin of Cubism

If we look at the southern landscape by Cézanne facing page 426, we shall perceive that in his desire to make the objects look solid and enduring the artist has sharpened some curves into angles and emphasised cubic forms. This method of expressing the volume of objects was seen to be powerful and effective and was seized upon by certain of the Fauves, who, desirous above all things of being forcible, elaborated their discovery into a dogma. Further, they supported their practice by a specious theory based on a smattering of science. We have seen how at the beginning of the present century there was a craze for the primitive among a certain section of artists. These young men picked up from mineralogists the idea that the *crystal* was the *primitive form* of all things. A strange new test was applied to pictures: Did they or did they not show evidence of "crystallisation"? A phrase torn from a scientific handbook was adopted as an æsthetic watchword:

> All *secondary* forms arise from the decrement of particles from the *edges* and *angles* of these primitive forms.

Therefore to restore natural objects and human beings to their "primitive" forms, it was necessary to eliminate all curved lines and to reconstruct forms and faces in their "primary" form, octahedron, dodecahedron, six-sided prism, or whatever other geometrical figure might be most suitable. Among the earliest pictures embodying this new doctrine were landscapes in which meadows were crumpled up into crisp, candy-like masses, and marines in which all the waves had a sharp edge. These pictures were the work of a young Frenchman named Georges Bracque; and it is still a matter for considerable argument whether Bracque or the Spanish artist Pablo Picasso is to be regarded as the true founder of Cubism.

Picasso

Picasso was born at Malaga in 1881, and appeared in Paris about the end of the nineteenth century as an accomplished and masterly draughtsman. His early work "Mother and Child" (see illustration facing page 428) shows the normality of his art and his genuine gifts before he attached himself definitely to the Fauviste movement. Possessed of the quick and fertile brain of an inventive engineer, Picasso poured forth in quick succession a number of paintings of startling novelty in a variety of styles before he reached the mode that is now known as Cubism. On his practice, the outcome of a restless search for novelty of effect and of tireless experiments in pattern-making, others built up a new pseudo-philosophy of art. As a theory Cubism was based on two dogmatic assertions and a fallacious conclusion. It was argued:

(1) Strength is Beauty.

(2) A straight line is stronger than a curved line.

It is hardly necessary to point out how faulty are both these contentions, for in the first place nothing is more beautiful or weaker than a flower, and in the second it is a commonplace of construction that an arch is stronger than a horizontal on two

perpendiculars. Nevertheless, blind to the error of their major and minor premise, the Cubists with a parade of logic proceeded to the conclusion that a painting wholly composed of straight lines is stronger and therefore more beautiful than a painting containing curved lines. Picasso's "Head of a Lady in a Mantilla" (see illustration facing page 429) illustrates the first phase of Cubism, in which the human body is cut into geometrical forms. It is a "crystallisation" of a human head which looks less like a painting than a wood-carving executed by a savage with a blunt instrument, yet once our eyes have grown accustomed to the strange barbarism of the technique we have to acknowledge that this head is not altogether wanting in expression.

The first phase of Cubism is simple in comparison with the second, for if the first consisted in cutting up natural objects into geometrical shapes, the second consisted in shuffling the pieces. This curious development, with which the name of Picasso is chiefly associated, professed to show, not merely one aspect of objects, but a number of sectional aspects seen from different standpoints and arbitrarily grouped together in one composition. By this method the painting of a simple object like a teacup is transfigured into an unrecognisable fugue—consisting of fragments of the cup as seen from above, from the sides, and, as held up in the air, from below. These ingenious conglomerations, professing to give us "the greater reality" of things seen, leave us as bewildered, confused, and uninformed as a metaphysician's analysis of truth and error. As an example of the second phase of Cubism we give Picasso's "Portrait of M. Kahnweiler" (see illustration facing page 429), in which all we can recognise are fragmentary frontal aspects of his waistcoat (with watch-chain), left eye, left ear, and one side of his nose drowned in a chaotic sea of various aspects of receipt-files and other unrecognisable objects. Thus a movement which originated in an attempt to secure a primitive simplicity was led astray by false doctrines, till it finally wandered into a blind-alley of complexity, for the

complications of Neo-Impressionist painting were child's play in comparison with the entanglements of the puzzle-pictures of the later Cubists.

Following upon the distortions of M. Matisse and the strange pictures of the Cubists, in which the facts of vision were either ignored or so juggled with that they became incomprehensible, it is not surprising that yet another school of painters arose who abandoned representation as an indispensable element in picture-making and argued that painting should be as free as music to give emotional pleasure without any appeal to association of material ideas. This claim that painting should be abstract, and not concern itself with the concrete, was argued by the Polish artist Wassily Kandinsky, working at Munich in 1914, more convincingly in his book *The Art of Spiritual Harmony* than in his kaleidoscopic pictures. In theory it seems plausible enough that if a musician is free to weave melodies without reference to natural sounds, a painter should be free to construct compositions without reference to natural forms. It is also true that the emotional pleasure we derive from the stained-glass windows of an old cathedral does not depend on the subject painted. We are enchanted with the radiant beauty of the pattern of colour. So far so good, but now comes the point that no artist living or dead has yet succeeded in convincing the world that these stained-glass windows would give us any keener or purer emotional pleasure if they had no subject, or been able himself to produce an abstract painting more beautiful in colour and pattern than paintings based on concrete forms.

Kandinsky, however, went a step further, and claimed that his abstract paintings were not mere dream-patterns, but had a meaning for the initiated in that they were based on the psychological effect on the observer of various lines and colours. But these effects are by no means definitely established, they are still a subject for speculation, and till they are fixed by the common consent of mankind, experiments in the "art of spiritual

Photo: E. Druet.

"PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST," BY VINCENT VAN G[illegible]

Shop-assistant, schoolmaster, and missionary before he became a painter, Van Gogh i one of the most romantic and pathetic figures in modern painting. This early portrait of himself shows the fanatical sincerity of his character, and the passionate vehemence of his individual style of painting.

harmony" must necessarily be uncertain and inconclusive. Indeed in Kandinsky's own "Compositions"—as his abstract paintings are entitled—outward and visible signs alone give us a clue to the inward and spiritual meaning, and it is by discerning faint traces of a gun-carriage, a puff of smoke, and falling houses in one of his pre-War pictures, painted in 1913, that we obtain a sense of that "clash and conflict of ideas in the spiritual world" that the painting is said to express.

Futurism

The sectional representation of divers aspects of different objects was developed, with an added emphasis on the expression of movement, by the group of Italian painters known as the "Futurists." Futurism was a literary as well as an artistic movement, and it was largely a protest against the tyranny of the past on the part of ardent nationalists, who resented that the present achievements of their country should be obscured by the glory of its past. The leader of the movement was a writer, Signor Marinetti, and his skilled pen justified the extraordinary practices of his artist friends by sonorous phrases. A pictorial record of the commonplace fact that the seat of a chair is visible after the sitter has got up and walked away, was majestically alluded to as an example of "the plastic interpenetration of matter." As regards colour the Futurists accepted the divisionism and complementarism of the Neo-Impressionists, but in the rendering of form they sought to introduce new principles: "Universal dynamism must be rendered in painting as a dynamic sensation; movement and light destroy the materiality of bodies." An amusing example of the "dynamic decomposition of matter" is Giacomo Balla's painting "A Lady and her Dog" (see illustration facing page 429), which may be regarded as a synthesis of rapid-motion photography. A multiplicity of paws and tails indicates that the animal is trotting with wagging tail, four ghostly chains suggest the whirling of

his lead, and an army of shoes presents the movement of his owner's feet. In concentrating their endeavours on the expression of movement, the Futurists attempted to convert painting from an art of space to an art of time. Their daring experiments have produced few pictures likely to stand the test of time, but possibly an exception may be made for Signor Balla's "Centrifugal Force." This painting of revolving spheres shooting forth golden sparks into an azure void was not only decorative in design and colour, but also nobly expressive of the Force that shoots meteorolites through the universe. An abstract painting that succeeds in expressing an abstract idea is clearly legitimate art, but pictures of this calibre are unfortunately the exception among abstract paintings.

Nevertheless it would be wrong to assert that the experiments of the modern extremists in painting have been wholly valueless. Technically they have widened the horizon of painting and opened the road to a new realism in which the firm structure and rigid design of the Cubists can be combined with a truth and beauty of colour derived from the Impressionists. Psychologically their work is of profound interest to every student of history. Coming events cast their shadow before them on the field of art. The patient reader who has followed this history thus far will have observed the increasing endeavour on the part of painters to give an expression of Strength. In examining their works he will have noticed that, however greatly they may vary in their aspects and styles, nearly all of them contain an element of Violence. These Fauvist, Cubist, and Futurist paintings never soothe us to rest; they aim at galvanising us into action. All of them must be regarded as symptoms, as expressions in art of the unrest, agitation, and suppressed violence seething subterraneously in Europe prior to the outbreak of the Great War. The effect of the War on art will be considered in the next chapter, but long before August, 1914, premonitions of the coming hostilities were given in the tumult of modern painting.

XXIV

ART DURING THE GREAT WAR

ART DURING THE GREAT WAR

A SURVEY OF THE WORK OF OFFICIAL WAR ARTISTS AND OTHERS

§ 1

Wyndham Lewis

IT was shown in the last chapter how at the beginning of the present century the art world was deluged with theories and "isms," while several of the pictures illustrated afforded evidence that a sinister violence and subterranean unrest became manifest in European painting before it exploded in European politics and precipitated a great war. On the Continent —and to a slighter extent in England also—the "wild-men" of painting had betrayed in form and colour that spirit of merciless aggression which eventually provoked Armageddon. The principal British contribution to the extreme left of modern painting was a development of Cubism known as "Vorticism," and it is not altogether without significance that the leader of this movement, Mr. P. Wyndham Lewis, should have begun in the early spring of 1914 a series of abstract paintings with titles taken from *military* textbooks. His "Plan of Campaign" (see page 451), exhibited at London in June, 1914, was based not on any vision of landscape and figures, but on such a diagram of a battle disposition as we may find in any history book. The parallel lines and blocks stand for the divisions of contending forces, and the heavy blocks in the upper right-hand corner are supposed to represent the extended left wing of one army outflanking and falling with

superior strength on the right wing of the other army. This is the "plan of campaign." Here again we have a curious premonition of the war expressed in paint. The case of Mr. Wyndham Lewis typifies the general effect the War had on art. When a student at the Slade School Mr. Lewis made himself remarked by the uncommon power of his drawing. Caught up in the vortex which swept so many ambitious young artists into the whirlpool of "abstract painting," because of their desire to attain novelty at all costs, Mr. Lewis was led in the years immediately preceding the War to paint "abstract" pictures, incomprehensible to the multitude and difficult for even the initiated to understand. Then in 1918, after two years' experience with the heavy artillery in France, he returned to London and returned to realism. "The Gun Pit," which he painted for the Canadian War Memorials, was no abstract picture, but a perfectly comprehensible painting based on vision, on his remembered experience with the big guns and of the big-built men who worked them.

The chief effect of the War on painting, therefore, was to bring about a return to realism, but it was a new realism modified, as we shall see, by certain principles derived from movements which, in themselves, appeared to be extravagant. Not only did the War restore to sanity many of the most promising of the younger artists, it also prepared the public to accept and understand their works. Youthful artists, who in peace time might have waited till middle age before their talent was recognised, became famous in a year or two. The wall of prejudice was broken down by the unparalleled upheaval of our normal world, so that even conservative minds were ready to consider impartially a new vision of new events. Further, though there was no slackness on the part of the younger artists in joining the colours, the artistic activity of Great Britain may be said to have reached its zenith during the years of war. Never before had so much official and state patronage been given to British

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"THE ONLY ROAD FOR AN ENGLISHMAN," BY G. SPENCER PRYSE

Still remembered for its effectiveness during the Recruiting Campaign of 1914–15, this poster, with its dignified design and noble appeal, shows how vividly art can be used to implant an idea in our minds.

Reproduced by permission of the London Underground Railways.

"REMEMBER BELGIUM," BY FRANK BRANGWYN, R.A.

This striking poster was specially drawn by Mr. Brangwyn for the famous series of artistic recruiting appeals issued by the London Electric Railways.

Reproduced by permission of the Artist.

"LA PATRIE," BY C. R. W. NEVINSON

An intensely tragic vision of "the broken débris of the war-machine." The treatment of the figures shows a modified use of the Cubist method, which is helpful here as an indication that "war is a process in which man is not treated as a human being but as an item in a great instrument of destruction."

artists, never before did the British public so clearly recognise that picture-making was not a mere pastime but an activity which had its own function and purpose of usefulness to humanity.

As early as 1914–15 the first public recognition of the artist's value to the state in war-time came in connection with the recruiting campaign. "Art for art's sake" was dead and done with, but in its place was substituted a new gospel of "Art for the Idea's sake." Art was recognised as an element of education and social progress, because nothing else in the world could impress an idea so vividly and lastingly on the human memory. During the first winter and spring of the War close on a hundred posters were commissioned from various artists by the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, and 2,500,000 copies of these posters were distributed throughout the United Kingdom. In addition to these official posters, generous contributions were made to the campaign by several private firms. The recruiting posters issued by the London Electric Railways will be long remembered for their efficiency and artistic qualities, notably Mr. Brangwyn's "Remember Belgium" (see illustration facing this page) and Mr. G. Spencer Pryse's "The Only Road for an Englishman" (see illustration facing page 438). Later the use as a poster during the War Savings Campaign of a reproduction of Whistler's portrait of his Mother (see illustration facing page 389)—as a gentle reminder that "Old Age Must Come"—was significant of a growing belief on the part of Authority that the most artistic picture can make the widest public appeal.

Simultaneously with the appearance of the recruiting posters on the hoardings, came the war cartoons in the newspapers. It is impracticable to give a list of the British artists who did excellent work in this direction—every reader will remember notable drawings.

Meanwhile what of painting? It was said rather bitterly in 1916 that "no visitor to the Royal Academy would know that

there was a war on." It may be admitted frankly that the exhibitions in these years looked much the same as those in years of peace. Pictures of the War were infrequent and when present they were rarely successful. The failure of the older artists to grapple with the situation was neither surprising nor shameful. They did not possess the requisite experience. Some endeavoured to be topical and envisaged the War after their memory of Crimean pictures, changing the uniforms into khaki but repeating the old arrangements. But sword-waving officers, swaggering cavalrymen, and neatly brushed infantry were no longer convincing even to civilians. Standing before an Academy picture of a charge, a wounded New Zealander was overheard to remark: "That's absurd! one man with a machine-gun would wipe out the lot." New methods of warfare demanded new methods of painting for their efficient expression. The battle in art, as at the Front, was for the young, and the first man to capture the imagination of London by his war pictures was a young artist hitherto practically unknown.

§ 2

Nevinson

Before the War Mr. Christopher R. W. Nevinson was only known to the few as a young artist of promise. After studying at the Slade School of Art, he had formed ties of friendship in Paris with the Italian artist Gino Severini, and so had become influenced by Futurism. He was also interested in Cubism, and though he never definitely adhered to "Vorticism" he exhibited once with Mr. Wyndham Lewis, Mr. Edward Wadsworth, Mr. William Roberts, and other Vorticists. During the early stages of the War Mr. Nevinson was driving a motor-ambulance behind the Belgian Front, and being invalided with rheumatic fever early in 1915 he was able to resume painting during his convalescence. Thus he was practically the first artist who had the oppor-

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"A GROUP OF SOLDIERS," BY C. R. W. NEVINSON

From the painting in the Imperial War Museum.

After 1915 the British soldier was the British workman in disguise. In the above picture the artist has unveiled the man behind the uniform and expressed this truth with convincing simplicity and force. Faint traces of Cubism, revealed in the definite angles of the modelled forms, help to give strength and doggedness to the sturdy figures.

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"A SKETCH IN ALBERT," BY MUIRHEAD BONE

A drawing made on the spot by the first "Official Artist" sent by the British Government to the Western Front. Mr. Bone, who is our premier living etcher, gives a vivid impression here of the ravaged state of this Belgian town, and invests its ruin with a dignity of his own.

tunity to exhibit in London pictures of the War based on personal experience of the realities of modern fighting. It was in the spring of 1915 that Mr. Nevinson showed his first three war pictures in the exhibition of the London Group at the Goupil Gallery, and though these betrayed Futurist and Cubist influence, they were perfectly intelligible as illustrations of actual incidents.

Dr. Johnson maintained that there was some good to be got out of every book, and similarly it may be argued that there is some good to be got out of every artistic theory. It was the peculiar distinction of Mr. Nevinson to leave aside all the extravagances of Futurism and Cubism, and snatch from them the two things which helped him to render realistically a new world in a new way. The particular good thing in the work of the Italian Futurists was their successful suggestion of movement. By a generous use of slanting lines in the composition, Mr. Nevinson gave a vivid sense of movement and life to his early painting "Returning to the Trenches." His French soldiers, with packs on their backs, their bodies and rifles sloping in the direction in which they were marching, were not portrayed as they would be shown in a photograph: the aim here was not to portray a group of individual soldiers, but to express the onward rush of an advancing army, and this impression was vividly and irresistibly conveyed. Further, the use of straight lines and avoidance of curves—characteristics derived from Cubism—suggested that the movement was that of a vast machine rather than of a collection of human beings.

The distinguished art critic Mr. A. Clutton Brock has pointed out in one of his essays that for fifty years or more a belief has been growing on us that man is a machine and "should be conscious of the fact that he is one." The popular play "R.U.R." was an expression of this consciousness in dramatic form; in painting it was confessed by the Cubist method which, as Mr. Clutton Brock has said,

> does express, in the most direct way, the sense that in war man behaves like a machine or part of a machine, that war is a process in which man is not treated as a human being but as an item in a great instrument of destruction, in which he ceases to be a person and is lost in a process. The cubist method, with its repetition and sharp distinction of planes, expresses this sense of a mechanical process better than any other way of representation.

Familiarity with the working of the "war-machine" prepared the mind of the public to accept that vision of the world as a complicated piece of mechanism which is the essence both of Cubism and Futurism. The War offered to the Cubists one of the few subjects which their technique was fitted to express, and the marvel is that this opportunity, missed by the French and Italian inventors of the new method, was seized upon with conspicuous success by a handful of almost unknown British artists.

From the first Mr. Nevinson stood out from all previous painters of war by reason of his power in suggesting movement, and the implication in his pictures that modern war was not the affair of human individuals, but the creaking progress of a complicated machine. His remarkable painting of the interior of a hospital, "La Patrie" (see illustration facing page 439), now the property of Mr. Arnold Bennett, is tragical in its intensity, but it is the tragedy of automata crushed and mangled in the revolutions of a pitiless machine. Other artists have painted the interiors of base-hospitals, pictures of men bandaged but smiling, and attended by a bevy of comely nurses, so that the spectator might imagine it was rather pleasant than otherwise to be wounded; but Mr. Nevinson permits no falsifying of the facts, he shows us the reality of the thing, the broken debris of the war-machine, the pain and the suffering and, above all, the relative insignificance of the individual pawn in this mighty war-game.

The versatility of Mr. Nevinson and the way in which he

alters his style to suit his subject is seen in "A Group of Soldiers" (see illustration facing page 440). The great truth about the English "Tommy" after 1915 was that he was the British workingman in disguise, and here with unerring accuracy Mr. Nevinson has penetrated to the man behind the uniform and unveiled the man of toil, the unit of the machine. Some have demurred that in the foremost figures the hands are exaggerated but, while the point is open to debate, a slight exaggeration is permissible as emphasising the fact that these men belong to the horny-handed class. In this group, where there is no movement to be registered, Futurist devices would be out of place and they are avoided, but there is still a faint trace of Cubism in the definite angles of the simple modelling, and this helps to give a monumental sense of strength and doggedness to the sturdy figures.

In landscape, as well as in his figure-paintings, Mr. Nevinson contrived to get at the reality behind the thing seen. "The Road from Arras to Bapaume" (see Colour Plate) is neither impressionistic nor photographic, but it gives the essential truth of a scene acutely remembered. All the inessential details have been suppressed, with the result that the main recollections of the truth—the white, switchback track of Roman straightness, the lopped down tree-trunks, the stream of moving traffic, and the limitless expanse—are recorded with increased strength and intensity. This is one of Mr. Nevinson's later war-pictures, and while he no doubt enjoyed greater facilities and privileges when he returned to France in July, 1917, as an "official artist" than he had done in 1914–15 as a motor-mechanic, the essential qualities in his pictures remained the same. His reputation was made with the earlier pictures, in which the mannerisms were most marked; in the later works these mannerisms were pruned to a vanishing point, and realities were stated without any serious loss in strength and with increased clarity.

It is no wonder that the war-pictures of Mr. Nevinson took

London by storm in the early days of the War. He was the first to show the grim inner realities of modern fighting, and others who dealt only with appearances seemed in comparison remote from the heart of the subject. When other young artists were released from the fighting line, a new series of visions of men as automata expressed the new outlook of a new generation, but their work did not begin to appear in exhibitions till nearing the time of the Armistice in 1918.

"The Kensingtons at Laventie"

The first serious rival to Mr. Nevinson appeared in April, 1916, when a large painting, "The Kensingtons at Laventie" (see illustration facing page 445), by Mr. Eric H. Kennington, was exhibited in Regent Street. Mr. Kennington, a young painter of promise in whom Mr. William Nicholson had taken an interest, was an artist of quite another type. He was untouched by the most modern movements, except that he had a leaning towards simplicity of drawing and emphasis of design: this and a knowledge of the War from within was all he had in common with Mr. Nevinson. After only three months' training in England as a Territorial, Private Kennington went to France at the beginning of November, 1914, with the 13th Battalion of the London Regiment ("The Kensingtons"). He returned to England in 1915, when he was discharged unfit for further service, and then began to paint this great picture of a typical moment in the life at the Front during the terrible winter of 1914–15. The moment chosen for representation in this picture was when his platoon, after serving for four days and nights in the fire trenches, enduring the piercing cold of twenty degrees of frost and almost continuous snow, had at last been relieved. The men have emerged from the communication trench terminating in a ruined farmyard, and are forming up along the ruined village street. Each figure in the picture is an actual portrait, and the artist has given the following description of his work:

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"TO THE UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER IN FRANCE," BY SIR WILLIAM ORPEN, R.A.

This painting, the "picture of the year" in the Royal Academy of 1923, is the artist's tribute to the Unknown Soldier. The gilded pomp of the Palace of Versailles, where the Peace Treaty was signed, is imaginatively contrasted with the ragged misery of the ghostly boy-soldiers who watch over the coffin of their comrade. Festooned Cupids and the Cross shining in the distance are symbols of the "Greater Love" of those who have laid down their lives. Scrupulous fidelity to reality and high powers of imagination are shown in this much discussed picture.

§ 3

Appointment of Official Artists

"Often," says a character in one of Sudermann's novels, "Art leads us astray because she has deliberately tried to reflect something quite different from the spirit of her time." Many visitors to the Royal Academy and other exhibitions in 1915 and 1916 felt vaguely that the pictures they saw there were leading them astray. Mr. Kennington's picture and the paintings of Mr. Nevinson acted on them differently, because these seemed truer to the spirit of the time. The outworn conventions of the older artists seemed powerless to convey an adequate expression of the clash of the world conflict, and possibly it was the general failure of well-known and eminent painters to deal with the War that led the British Government to select a black-and-white artist as the first "Official Artist." In addition to the useful propaganda work accomplished by poster-artists and cartoonists, it was felt that the nation should possess permanent records of typical scenes and episodes in the greatest war the world had ever known. The outcome of this feeling was the appointment in August, 1916, of Mr. Muirhead Bone as an official artist on the Western Front. The appointment was eminently appropriate, for Mr. Bone's known ability to make memorable designs from scaffolding and the demolition of buildings argued that he was the right man to depict the havoc of war.

Muirhead Bone

Born at Glasgow in 1876, Mr. Muirhead Bone came to London in 1901 and was a prominent member of the New English Art Club long before the War. His masterly etchings and drawings of architectural subjects have long been highly prized by connoisseurs. In 1915–16 Mr. Bone had devoted much of his time to the interpretation of British war industries, sketching "The Building of a Liner," "The Yards on the Clyde," and simi-

"SUNRISE: INVERNESS COPSE," BY PAUL NASH

From the painting in the Imperial War Museum.

"In drawing strange places so strangely Mr. Nash contrives to bring back to the mind the strange things felt by men who were there at moments of stress." In this picture of a wood after being exposed to constant shelling, a landscape painter imaginatively expresses his horror at the way in which war distorts and devastates a peaceful scene.

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"ADVANCED DRESSING STATION ON THE STRUMA, 1916," BY HENRY LAMB

City Art Gallery, Manchester.

The artist, who served in Macedonia with the Red Cross, shows another aspect of war in this picture of a dressing station behind the firing-line. Clear in every detail, natural yet delicately balanced in design, the work as a whole is wonderfully eloquent of the weariness and boredom felt in this quiet moment when the men are waiting for the wounded to arrive.

lar subjects. After his new appointment the regular publication in parts, from the office of *Country Life,* of reproductions of Mr. Bone's drawings made on the Western Front, opened a new era in the pictorial treatment of the War. Drawings like the "Sketch in Albert" (see illustration facing page 441) show with what economy and distinction Mr. Bone achieved his task of presenting with pictorial dignity and actual truth the aspect of ravaged buildings and wasted landscape. Though Mr. Bone's reputation was made before the War, these portfolios increased his admirers a hundredfold, and the unexpected popularity and wide demand for his books of sketches soon convinced the authorities that there was room and to spare for other official artists.

In April, 1917, Mr. James McBey, another Scottish artist, born in Aberdeenshire in 1883, who was akin in style to Mr. Bone, and also chiefly known for his etchings and drawings, was appointed the Official Artist for Egypt and Palestine. The same month Sir William Orpen, R.A., was sent to France as an official artist.. A large collection of the paintings he made there was freely presented by the artist to the nation and may be seen in the Imperial War Museum.

§ 4

Paul Nash

Some two months after these last appointments, a small collection of water-colours of "The Ypres Salient" was exhibited at the Goupil Gallery. They were the work of a young soldier, Mr. Paul Nash, who then was practically unknown, though he and his brother John Nash had already exhibited at the New English Art Club water-colours which had attracted attention among connoisseurs by reason of their unsophisticated simplicity and naïve charm. Though enthusiastically welcomed by some of the leading art-critics, Mr. Nash's first exhibition passed almost unnoticed by the public, but a second exhibition of his war-draw-

ings, held later at the Leicester Galleries, aroused widespread interest, and the publication by *Country Life* of a book of his water-colours established his reputation as an original artist who had and could express poignantly his own vision of the War. In the introduction to this volume of reproductions, Capt. C. E. Montague wrote:

> In drawing strange places so strangely Mr. Nash contrives to bring back to the mind the strange things felt by men who were there at moments of stress. One does not see with the eyes alone, but with brain and nerves too, and if these are worked upon in unusual ways, then the messages brought in by the little waves of light that break on delicate shores in the eye are changed—some may say disturbed or blurred; others may say refined into an uncommon-rightness, not to be had at other times. If an artist succeeds in expressing effects of such changes, his work may well delight some of those who have felt the changes go on in themselves.

A picture like "Sunrise: Inverness Copse" (see illustration facing page 446) may not be "true" as the camera sees truth; but it is true to the memory of a nerve-racked fighting-man. Granted that it contain exaggerations, they are exaggerations of significant elements in the scene. The lumps and holes in the foreground are a pointed commentary on the deeply pit-marked earth exposed to constant shelling. Mr. Paul Nash paints his subjects as seen by the mind's eye, and the mind of man ever enlarges that which it has cause to fear. A sensitive and emotional artist, Mr. Nash paints in these water-colours not only what he has seen, but what he has *felt*. As a landscape painter, what he felt most deeply was the abomination of desolation caused by war. Whereas Nevinson showed us soldiers as cogs in the war-machine, Nash presented the Earth as a tortured and violated entity. These two painters, the first realist, the second imaginative, each formed and inspired by the War, were the complement of each other. Nevinson showed the complicated,

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"THE ROAD FROM ARRAS TO BAPAUME," BY C. R. W. NEVINSON

From the Painting in the Imperial War Museum.

The son of a famous war-correspondent, Mr. Nevinson was the first artist to make a reputation by his original and intense interpretation of scenes on the battlefields. This painting of a road familiar to thousands of British soldiers is a typical example of his later war-pictures, in which mannerisms and inessential details have alike been suppressed, and the main characteristics of the remembered scene are stated with emphatic simplicity and clearness.

man-driven machinery of war; Nash its devastating effects. Many other artists of great skill and talent painted pictures of the War which were perhaps more pleasant to look upon; but none exhibited its inner ghastliness with more power, originality, and intensity of feeling. By midsummer, 1917, the best judges of modern painting were convinced that the two men who had most to say about the War in paint were C. R. W. Nevinson and Paul Nash. Representations were made to the proper authorities, with the result that during the next few months a new batch of "Official Artists" included Messrs. C. R. W. Nevinson, Paul Nash, Eric Kennington, and Sir John Lavery. As became his age and position, Sir John Lavery—who was born at Belfast in 1857—was enlisted, so to speak, for "home service." "The Royal Naval Division, Crystal Palace, 1916" (see illustration facing page 450), is an excellent example of the war pictures—charming in their delicate colour and atmosphere—which Sir John was able to paint without crossing the seas. Happy in its Whistlerian impressionism, in which Sir John is an adept, this picture is entirely worthy of the reputation of one of our leading portrait-painters, but it is no new revelation either of the spirit of the times or of the significance of war.

The artistic activity of Great Britain was at its height in 1917. In March the Imperial War Museum was instituted, and during the summer the Canadian War Memorials Fund was founded by Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Rothermere, who, acting under competent expert advice, accumulated a notable collection of pictures. When the collection was exhibited at Burlington House, prior to its dispatch to Canada, the work of the younger artists revealed to a significant degree the new spirit that was abroad in art. Nevinson and Nash were no longer alone; other artists of their own generation exhibited war-pictures in which similar tendencies could be discerned. Conspicuous among those who stressed the Cubist point of view, presenting soldiers as automata and emphasising the mechanism

of war, were Messrs. P. Wyndham Lewis and William Roberts; still more numerous were those who adopted a post-impressionist simplification of statement, among the most prominent members of this school being the brothers Stanley and Gilbert Spencer, Messrs. Paul and John Nash, and Mr. Henry Lamb. Pictures by all these artists and many others were also acquired for the Imperial War Museum.

Henry Lamb

Mr. Henry Lamb, another member of the New English Art Club who had attracted attention before the War by his powers of drawing and the emotional force in his pictures, was a comparative late-comer; for having been formerly a medical student he was fully occupied with Red Cross work up to and following the Armistice. When he resumed the brush, however, it was seen that he had taken notes during his service in Macedonia, and his picture "Advanced Dressing Station on the Struma, 1916" (see illustration facing page 447), now in the Manchester Art Gallery, is a notable contribution to the pictorial exposition of the psychology of war. It is not the excitement or frenzy of fighting that Mr. Lamb shows us, but the boredom and dreariness of the men who are waiting for unutterable things to happen. Precisely drawn, wonderfully clear, and simple in its design, this painting depicts a quiet moment in the campaigners' life, a moment when the weariness of all concerned finds abundant expression.

To deal with all the artists who painted war-pictures between 1914 and 1918 is obviously beyond the scope of this chapter, and therefore the work of many eminent painters—several of whom will be referred to subsequently—must be passed over in silence for the moment. Turning to a new subject does not necessarily change an artist's style, and it is the evolution of a new style rather than the discovery of a new subject which vitally affects the history of art. The number of Official Artists ap-

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"R.N.D., CRYSTAL PALACE," BY SIR JOHN LAVERY

From the painting in the Imperial War Museum.

An impression of the Royal Naval Division lined up on parade in the grounds of the Crystal Palace, by an artist who is equally adept in the deft sketching of a passing pageant or in the portraiture of a society beauty.

'PLAN OF CAMPAIGN," BY P. WYNDHAM LEWIS

A curious premonition of the War, this painting—exhibited at London in June, 1914—is based on the diagram of a battle disposition which we may see in any history book. The parallel lines and blocks stand for divisions of contending forces, and the heavy blocks in the upper right-hand corner are supposed to represent the superior forces of one army turning and crushing the right wing of the other.

"THE UNDERWORLD," BY WALTER BAYES

From the painting in the Imperial War Museum.

This remarkable painting of a London "tube" station during an air-raid was a conspicuous exhibit in the Royal Academy of 1918. It is at once a true human document of a typical episode and a grandly planned decorative painting in which the alien figures are stated with monumental simplicity and grandeur.

pointed was evidence of the curious way in which the War persuaded a "Business Government" to treat art with more seriousness and consideration than it had yet received in Great Britain. While many artists, like Sir John Lavery and Mr. Muirhead Bone, continued their former style and practice when engaged on these new subjects, other artists, as we have seen, were fired by their experiences in the trenches to the invention of new styles for the expression of new conditions. This direct or indirect influence of the War on art was not limited only to the artists who had served abroad; occasionally it made itself felt in the work of the men who stayed at home.

The most remarkable war-picture in the Royal Academy of 1918 had for its subject a London "Tube" station during an air raid. Mr. Walter Bayes's great canvas "The Underworld" (see illustration facing this page) is a vigorous and haunting painting which in its style approaches the new manner of post-impressionism. Designed as a mural decoration, the picture shows an appropriate monumental treatment of the alien figures who sprawl about the platform. The faces are not English faces, but on occasions such as the artist depicts London's underworld was full of these types. Mr. Bayes ably commemorates in their characteristic attitudes and dishevelled condition, the dreary languor of these semi-orientals waiting in safety for the "All clear" signal which will tell them it is safe to return to the Metropolis. Mr. Walter Bayes, who is Head of the Westminster School of Art and a member of a well-known family of artists, had long been known as a decorative painter of great talent, but he had never previously produced a painting so precious as a human document.

The public, as well as the technical expert, can appreciate good drawing, attractive colour, and well-balanced design; but these things alone will not serve to capture its imagination. It demands rightly that a picture should contain an idea or an emotion that can be clearly grasped. To some artists—mostly of the

younger generation—the War afforded the most astounding experience they had ever undergone, and overwhelmed by it they burst through the barriers of school-taught orthodox painting to express with a primitive ferocity the intensity of their own sensations. By placing on permanent record, not only the scenes caused but the emotions evoked by the War, they have rendered services to both History and Art which posterity will know how to value.

XXV

THE ART OF TO-DAY

By Frank Rutter

THE ART OF TO-DAY

FROM JOHN S. SARGENT TO AUGUSTUS JOHN

By Frank Rutter

§ 1

THE art of to-day is a cosmopolitan business. Rapidity of communications and the interchange of international ideas have broken down the old frontiers of thought, so that while painters of various styles can now be found in all civilised countries, the styles throughout the world are very much alike, and it is difficult to make out a case for any distinctive national art. If it be hazardous, however, to assert that there exists at present a "British School," distinct from the schools of painting in France, Spain, Italy, and other countries, it may nevertheless be said with sufficient confidence that to-day, in the words of Sir Robert Witt, "British art stands second to none in the world."

Writing nearly fifteen years ago, the late Sir Walter Armstrong said:

> The Pre-Raphaelite revolt is the last great movement which really belongs to the history of British Art. Those developments which have taken place since are more cosmopolitan than British. They have been moves towards assimilating our insular ideas to those of the Continent, which, in painting, means the ideas of France and Holland. Being

all moves in one direction, they have had considerable similarity one with another, and it is scarcely worth while to dwell much on the differences which separate the neo-Scots school from that of Newlyn, or both from those franker disciples of Paris who have been so greatly encouraged by the genius of two Americans, Whistler and Sargent.

Sargent

Mr. John Singer Sargent, R.A., who has been perhaps the greatest influence in portrait-painting in our time, is himself Paris-trained. Born at Florence in 1856, the son of American parents—his father being a physician at Boston, U.S.A.—Mr. Sargent was educated in Italy and Germany, studied painting under Carolus Duran at Paris, and finally settled in England during the eighties. In his own person, therefore, Mr. Sargent represents in the most marked manner the cosmopolitan experiences which go to the making of a modern painter. A word may be said here as to his master, Carolus Duran, who was born at Lille in 1837, for though this painter won the coveted Prix de Rome and spent four years in Italy, he became the leading French portrait-painter of his time by reason of his later study of Velazquez in Madrid. Carolus Duran, then, was one of the pioneers who turned away the thought of his contemporaries and pupils from the Italian and Flemish to the Spanish schools of painting, and his art, like that of his still more famous pupil Mr. Sargent, is largely derived from Velazquez. The English portraiture of the eighteenth century, as has already been shown, was modelled firstly on the practice of Van Dyck and secondly on that of the Venetians; the new note introduced into portrait-painting towards the middle of the nineteenth century, and still dominant at the present day, is based on the work of Velazquez and Goya.

While many have drawn inspiration from this common source, the results obtained from following, in the main, the Spanish tradition, have varied considerably according to the indi-

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"ENA AND BETTY WERTHEIMER," BY JOHN S. SARGENT, R.A.

National Gallery, London.

This alluring picture of the two elder daughters of the famous art-dealer, Mr. Ascher Wertheimer, has the bravura of a great executant in paint and the lifelike expression of character which has made Mr. Sargent one of the most penetrating of the world's portrait-painters.

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"LORD RIBBLESDALE," BY JOHN S. SARGENT, R.A.

National Gallery, London.

Painted in 1902, this noble full-length portrait presents Lord Ribblesdale, then Master of the Buckhounds, in hunting costume. It was given to the National Gallery by the sitter as a memorial of his wife and of his two sons who were killed respectively in Somaliland and in Gallipoli.

vidual temperaments of the artists. In Mr. Sargent's painting we see the irrepressible energy which we associate with Transatlantic business enterprise; he is a "hustler" in paint who sweeps us off our feet by the amazing vivacity of his brushwork and by the almost uncanny actuality with which he sets a living being before us. A vigorous draughtsman, using sweeps of paint with economic mastery, Mr. Sargent developed powers of psychological penetration which make him supreme in the rendering of character. Some of his male portraits have been so merciless in their unmasking of the real minds of his sitters that they have justified the amusing but apt comment of "Mr. Dooley":

> "Stand there," he sez, "while I tear the ugly black heart out av ye."

At the same time his "Lord Ribblesdale" (see illustration facing this page) proves how noble a rendering of human dignity the artist can achieve when he is in complete sympathy with his sitter, while his brilliant group of "Ena and Betty Wertheimer" (see illustration facing page 456) is a masterpiece in which warm, living beings are presented with perfect naturalness yet with stately grandeur. The wonderful series of Wertheimer portraits, now in the National Gallery, is at once a revelation of the artist's power in the expression of different characters and a souvenir of his long association with the astute and esteemed art-dealer who, from his earliest days, stoutly affirmed his belief in the genius of Mr. Sargent.

Since he first exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1879, Mr. Sargent's career has been a steady upward progress. It was not till 1894 that he was elected an A.R.A., but before this he had exhibited with distinction both at the Academy and at the New English Art Club. His early portraits show traces of the influence of the Impressionists, but Mr. Sargent's connection with this school is less obvious in his portraits than in his landscapes and water-colours.

In water-colour Mr. Sargent has created a new and distinct style which has had a great effect on his contemporaries. How skilfully he uses it as a brilliant sketching medium may be seen in "The Piazetta, Venice" (see illustration facing page 466). Here, like Manet, he sees "no lines in nature," but builds up a vivid impression of the scene before him by brilliant touches of colour and strong contrasts of light and shade. It is a broad, vigorous style which, despite its summariness, gives a marvellous sense of actuality in the hands of a master. Though pre-eminent as a portrait-painter and as a sketcher in water-colour, Mr. Sargent has executed notable works in a variety of styles and media. He has painted important decorative works for public buildings in the United States, and he has also done some sculpture, notably his "Crucifixion" for the Boston Library, U.S.A., a bronze study for which may be seen in the Tate Gallery.

§ 2

Glancing briefly at the number of British artists who have attained eminence by the character and individuality of their work —a number so great that it excludes any possibility of doing justice to them all within the space of this chapter—it is not without significance to note how few of them have received their training in the Royal Academy schools. In recent years the most fruitful forcing-grounds for British Art have been the Scottish schools and the Slade School in London; other painters of distinction have come from the Royal College of Art in South Kensington or have received their training abroad.

Brangwyn

It has often been said that the rank of a living artist can most fairly be gauged by the esteem in which he is held by foreign countries. By this reckoning a high place must be assigned to Mr. Frank Brangwyn, R.A., for few British artists have been

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"THE POULTERER'S SHOP," BY FRANK BRANGWYN, R.A.

Tate Gallery, London.

Mr. Brangwyn has a worldwide reputation as a decorative artist. This picture, originally exhibited in the Academy of 1916, is a splendid example of his original powers of colour and design, and reveals the romantic imagination which enables him to turn commonplace things like fruit, vegetables, dead poultry, and shop utensils, into a glowing pageant full of splendour and opulence.

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"THE GIRL AT THE GATE," BY GEORGE CLAUSEN, R.A.

Tate Gallery, London.

Tender and sympathetic in its feeling for the sweet simplicity of rural life, this picture shows the influence of J. F. Millet and his follower the peasant-painter Bastien-Lepage. Painted in 1889 it is the best-known example of the first manner of an accomplished artist who in his more recent pictures has added a prismatic beauty of colour to his interpretations of the life of cottagers and agriculturists.

more fêted than he on the Continent and in America. Paris, Munich, Vienna, Brussels, Madrid, Holland, and Italy, all have showered honours and distinctions on this artist. Born at Bruges in 1867 of Welsh extraction, Mr. Brangwyn was from boyhood familiar with the splendours of Flemish tapestry, and though he first obtained notice by his power of drawing as an illustrator, his real bent has always been towards decorative art. In his early boyhood he worked with William Morris, executing designs for tapestries, etc.; but when he was only sixteen he left Morris and went to sea, and the knowledge of shipping and seafaring life which he thus gained stood him in good stead when he again returned to London and the practice of art. All his most important early pictures were of subjects he had seen at sea; among them may be mentioned "Ashore" (1890), "Burial at Sea" and "Salvage" (1891), and "The Convict Ship" (1892). The sturdy drawing, glowing colour, and spacious design in these works, marked out the decorative painter of the future, though at this time the artist was earning his living principally by seafaring drawings, executed for the *Graphic* and other illustrated papers. In addition to his drawings and paintings Mr. Brangwyn also devoted himself to etching, and his plates of the working maritime life on the lower reaches of the Thames were among the earliest of his works to attain a wide popularity.

Influenced to some extent perhaps by the Belgian painter and sculptor Constantin Meunier (1831–1905), whose vigorous art illustrated the industrial and mining life of the "Black Country" of Belgium, Mr. Brangwyn soon made his reputation as a painter by his unique gift of basing heroic decorative designs on typical scenes and episodes of modern industrialism. In 1895 his "Trade on the Beach" was bought for the Luxembourg, Paris, and a few years later his panel "Commerce" in the Royal Exchange, London, made his decorative gifts widely known to his own compatriots. His decorations for the Skinners' Hall and the series of panels illustrating typical modern industries,

originally designed for the British Pavilion in the Venice International Exhibition and now in the Leeds Art Gallery, may be cited as brilliant examples of the decorative mural painting which this artist has done so much to revive.

Though latterly gigantic projects of decorative painting in the United States have taken up much of Mr. Brangwyn's time, so that he is now a comparatively rare exhibitor in London, he has been a prolific producer of pictures, water-colours, and etchings in addition to his mural painting. He is limited neither in method nor in subject, but whether the latter be a scene in Italy, an impression of Pittsburgh, or a table laden with the rich fruits of a sumptuous dessert, the presentation of the theme is invariably decorative and grandiose. "The Poulterer's Shop" (see illustration facing page 458), which was bought for the nation by the Chantrey Trustees from the Academy of 1916, is a glowing example of the sense of opulent splendour which Mr. Brangwyn's imagination and executive skill can extract from dead poultry, a heap of vegetables, and commonplace utensils.

§ 3

The Glasgow School

Since Pettie and Orchardson Scotland has always been strongly represented in the Royal Academy. The younger Scottish school originated in Glasgow, whither about fifty years ago a very large number of fine pictures by the French romanticists found their way into public and private collections. In the appreciation of Corot and his contemporaries, Scotland was far ahead of England, and since Whistler also found favour more quickly in the north than in the south, the Scottish painters were, generally speaking, more advanced than their English confrères during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Of the group of painters known as the Glasgow School, it may be broadly said that the figure-painters were chiefly influenced by Whistler, the landscapists by Corot and the French romanticists. Among

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"THE VESTIBULE," BY JAMES PRYDE

Property of the Earl of Crawford.

Dramatic design is the supreme quality in the work of this most original artist. We do not know who are the figures in the foreground nor exactly what they are doing, but the stage is so beautifully set that we feel intensely that something is about to happen, and spell-bound by the dignity of the scene we also wait in "The Vestibule" content with a spectacle of life that is mysterious but suggestive.

Reproduced by permission of the Artist. *Photo: P. Laib*

PORTRAIT OF MRS. HAMMERSLEY, BY P. WILSON STEER

In this radiant, sunlit portrait we see the confluence of British and French influences—Gainsborough, Constable, Watteau, and the Impressionists—which are happily blended in the distinctive art of Mr. Wilson Steer, who, as this picture proves, excels equally in portraiture and landscape painting. Mr. Steer is one of the founders of the New English Art Club, and as one of the teaching staff of the Slade School he has had a widespread influence on English art.

the most distinguished of the figure-painters are Sir James Guthrie, born in 1859 and elected President of the Royal Scottish Academy in 1902, who adds much of the robustness of Raeburn to a Whistlerian elegance and colour harmony; Sir John Lavery, born at Belfast in 1857, who has developed in his own way the graceful style and dainty colouring of Whistler, whether in portraying manly dignity, feminine loveliness, or in painting landscapes; Mr. E. A. Walton, equally at home in portrait and landscape, Mr. Harrington Mann, Mr. George Henry, and Mr. Edward Hornel, who with thick, enamel-like paint has invented a new style in which children are usually seen decoratively disposed amid flowery gardens of a semi-tropical luxuriance. In this school a place apart was held by the late Joseph Crawhall, whose animal paintings, and particularly his water-colours on brown holland, had an inevitability of line and simple grandeur of design which related his work to that of the greatest oriental artists.

D. Y. Cameron

Among the Glasgow landscape painters, most of whom, like W. Y. Macgregor and David Gauld, followed either the Barbizon or Modern Dutch Schools, the premier place has now been won by Mr. D. Y. Cameron, R.A. Born at Glasgow in 1865, Mr. Cameron has made a foremost place for himself as an etcher, rivalling Mr. Muirhead Bone in his masterly interpretation of architectural and landscape subjects, while he has also developed a most personal style as a painter, depicting the hills and lakes of Scotland and the picturesque houses in her cities with a fine simplicity of design and clear, translucent colour. While in his use of delicate hues, harmonized with subtlety, Mr. Cameron shows more than a passing acquaintance with Impressionism, in his emphasis of line and tendency towards simplification he exhibits in a mild and restrained form that reaction from Impressionism which ran to excess in Paris.

James Pryde

While there has never been a definite Edinburgh school, several modern painters of distinction have been associated with the Scottish capital, among them being Mr. James Pryde, one of the most original and gifted artists of our time. Born in 1869, Mr. Pryde is the son of the late Dr. David Pryde of St. Andrews and subsequently of Edinburgh. Though nominally he received his training, like so many others, at the Atelier Julien in Paris, very little French influence appears in his work. He learnt the decorative value of the silhouette from Whistler, something about the effective disposal of masses perhaps, from the brilliant French poster-designer Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901), and a good deal about dramatic composition from Hogarth. In other words, Mr. Pryde made his own choice among the masters and built up his own art by affinities and observation. It was by poster work that Mr. Pryde first roused the attention of the public. He had a sister, Mabel Pryde, who married another artist, William Nicholson, and the brothers-in-law, working under the pseudonym of "Beggarstaff Brothers," produced a series of posters in the nineties which electrified London by their outstanding artistic qualities.

Since he gave up poster-designing, Mr. Pryde has never made any attempt to obtain popularity. A fastidious and self-exacting painter, his output has been comparatively small, and the pictures he has shown at the old Grosvenor Gallery, at the New Gallery, and at the exhibitions of the International Society, of which he is a distinguished member, have appealed more to the collector and connoisseur than to the general public. As a painter he is difficult to place, for he is neither a realist nor an out-and-out romanticist. His subjects are a little mysterious, and though his pictures often have an eighteenth-century look, we hesitate to assign them to any definite period. What is happening in the picture is rarely clear, yet the artist contrives to hold our interest by a suggestion that something is about to

Photo: Tate Gallery.

"BANK HOLIDAY," BY WILLIAM STRANG, R.A. (1859–1921)

Tate Gallery, London.

Notable alike for its incisive drawing, clear, brilliant colour, effective design, and humorous, but sympathetic, observation of life, this picture of the embarrassment of a holiday-couple unused to the ways of restaurants marks the culmination of the artist's second manner, in which he united the severe classical drawing of Legros to the clean-coloured realism of Manet.

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PORTRAIT OF MISS JEKYLL, BY WILLIAM NICHOLSON

Tate Gallery, London.

Equally distinguished as a designer of posters and woodcuts and as a painter of realistic portraits and still-life subjects, Mr. Nicholson in this portrait presents his sitter with the uncompromising realism of a seventeenth-century Dutchman and with the decorative dignity of a Whistler.

happen. There is a strong feeling of latent drama in his work, because he excels in Dramatic Design.

"The Vestibule" (see illustration facing page 460), in the Earl of Crawford's Collection, is a characteristic example of the peculiar qualities in Mr. Pryde's work. Here, as in all his pictures, we find a stage beautifully set, a scene which so bewitches us by the nobility of its design, by the monumental splendour of its masses, by rich glows of colour from a whole of harmonious sombreness, that we catch our breath with delight at the spectacle, just as we might do in a theatre as the curtain goes up and before we have any knowledge of what action will take place on the scene.

William Nicholson

Mr. William Nicholson, who was born at Newark-on-Trent in 1872, served a lengthy apprenticeship before he developed into the popular painter of portraits and still-life that he is to-day. After the success of the posters which he designed jointly with his brother-in-law, he laid the foundations of his individual reputation by a remarkable series of woodcuts in colour. Three of his books, an *Alphabet,* an *Almanac of Twelve Sports,* and *London Types*—all published in 1898—widened the base of his popularity and made the name of William Nicholson known to thousands who rarely visit picture-exhibitions.

More definitely realistic, less imaginative, and less mysterious than Mr. Pryde, Mr. William Nicholson has this much in common with him, that he, too, is pre-eminently a designer. This much we may see in a work so remarkable for its fidelity to nature as his "Portrait of Miss Jekyll" (see illustration facing this page). In its suave rendering of character and atmosphere this portrait is descended from Velazquez through Whistler, but in its arresting simplicity, the effective placing of the chair-back, head, and hands as the accented notes of a diagonal composition, the picture is also related to the posters of the

Beggarstaff Brothers and to the masterly designs of the Far East.

A younger generation of Scottish artists, of whom the best known are S. J. Peploe, J. D. Fergusson, and Joseph Simpson, are connected with Edinburgh, not Glasgow, and form another distinct group. All of them were at first influenced by Whistler and subsequently by Manet and later French artists; and while each painter has his own personality, strong drawing, bright clean colour, and emphatic design are common to all three.

The once much-talked-of Newlyn School was never a local development, like that of Glasgow, but consisted of a group of artists drawn from various places who found this Cornish fishing village, near Penzance, a pleasant place in which to settle and practice open-air painting. Stanhope Forbes, the late Napier Hemy, the sea-painter, and Frank Bramley, have been considered the leaders and founders of this school. Other artists have founded colonies at St. Ives and elsewhere along the Cornish coast, some of the best known of the younger generation being the marine painter Mr. Julius Olsson, the landscape painter Mr. Lamorna Birch, and that particularly brilliant pair, alike in portraiture, landscape, and figure subjects, Harold and Laura Knight.

§ 4

The New English Art Club

No two institutions in the United Kingdom have produced a more remarkable sequence of illustrious artists than the New English Art Club and the Slade School of Art, and since, though separate in their origin, the two have come to be closely related to each other, it is convenient to consider them together. The New English Art Club was founded in the eighties by a number of young artists whose bond of union was a Paris training. Among

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"CHEF DE L'HÔTEL CHATHAM," BY SIR WILLIAM ORPEN, R.A.

Diploma Gallery, Royal Academy.

In this portrait of the Chef of a Paris Hotel Sir William Orpen uses all his amazing facility and dexterity in the handling of paint to put before us the rich humanity of a living being. Alike in its technical brilliance and in the human appeal of its democratic subject, this painting deserves to rank with Moroni's world-famous "Portrait of a Tailor."

the founders were the painters P. Wilson Steer and Frederick Brown and the sculptors J. Havard Thomas and T. Stirling Lee; while other early members included John S. Sargent, H. H. La Thangue, Mark Fisher, and George Clausen. For more than twenty years the New English Art Club has supplied the Royal Academy with nearly all its most distinguished members. At the present moment fifty per cent. of the Academicians and Associates are or have been exhibitors at the New English Art Club, while almost all the most important official art positions in London have been gradually captured by members of this club. Sir Charles J. Holmes and Mr. C. J. Collins Baker, respectively Director and Keeper of the National Gallery, Mr. D. S. MacColl, Keeper of the Wallace Collection, Mr. William Rothenstein, Principal of the Royal College of Art at South Kensington, are all former members of the New English Art Club.

The Slade School

Since its foundation the New English Art Club has largely recruited its strength from students of the Slade School, and the close alliance between the School and the Club is easily understood when we remember that the bond of union between the original clubmen was a Paris training, and when we discover that French influence has been paramount at the Slade School. This school of drawing and painting, situated in Gower Street and connected with University College, was named after Felix Slade (1790–1868), a famous art collector who left money for the endowment of (Slade) professorships of fine art in Oxford, Cambridge, and University College, London.

Alphonse Legros

The first Slade Professor at University College was Sir E. J. Poynter (1871–5), under whose direction the teaching was much the same as that given in the Royal Academy Schools, but

in 1876 he was succeeded by a distinguished French artist, M. Alphonse Legros, who, more than any other one man perhaps, may be said to have changed the character of British painting. Born at Dijon in 1837 and afterwards studying in Paris under the famous teacher of drawing, Lecoq de Boisbaudran, Alphonse Legros came to England in 1863. He was befriended by Whistler, Rossetti, Watts, and other English artists, and made his living principally by etching and by teaching. For a time he taught at the South Kensington School of Art, but in 1876 he was appointed Slade Professor at University College, a position he held till 1892. His picture of French peasant women at prayer (see illustration facing this page), painted at University College in 1888, is a characteristic example of the seriousness and earnestness of his art, and by its fine precision of drawing shows that Legros was a lineal descendant of Ingres. To a generation absorbed in problems of colour, lighting, and atmosphere, this broad-minded exponent of the French classical school came as a prophet in his insistence on impeccable drawing as the sure foundation of all good painting.

At the Slade, Legros worked wonders in two ways. His great reputation as a teacher attracted the most promising art students of the time; and his influence on these students had far-reaching effects. Legros, it had been well said, "brought English art again into closer touch with the main European tradition, and contributed largely to the noticeable revival of draughtsmanship in England at the close of the nineteenth century." Among the most gifted of his pupils were Charles Wellington Furse, William Strang, and William Rothenstein, all of whom laid the foundations of their reputations as painters by sterling drawing. After Legros left the Slade in 1892, the great tradition he bequeathed to the School was ably maintained by Prof. Frederick Brown, among whose pupils were Sir William Orpen and Augustus John, and since Mr. Brown's retirement Mr. Henry Tonks, also of the New English Art Club, has successfully

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"THE PIAZZETTA, VENICE," BY JOHN S. SARGENT, R.A.

Tate Gallery, London.

The intense realism of this water-colour is best seen when it is observed from some little distance. It is a brilliant study of sunshine playing on gondolas, the blue-green water of the canal, and on the arcades of a marble palace. In its breadth, vigour, and wonderful realisation of light and air, this characteristic water-colour is a masterpiece of Impressionist illusionism.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"FEMMES EN PRIÈRE," BY ALPHONSE LEGROS (1837–1911)

Tate Gallery, London.

A characteristic picture of French peasant-women at prayer in a church by the great teacher of the Slade School, who, coming from Paris to London in 1863, "contributed largely to the noticeable revival of draughtsmanship in England at the close of the nineteenth century." Legros was naturalised as an Englishman in 1881.

Photo: W. A. Mansell & Co.

"THE RETURN FROM THE RIDE," BY CHARLES WELLINGTON FURSE, A.R.A. (1868–1904)

Tate Gallery, London.

But for his early death at the age of thirty-six, this gifted artist would have been the rival of Mr. Sargent. His genius for the grand style both in figure-painting and in landscape culminated in this great equestrian portrait group of his friends Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Waterfield. This picture was exhibited at the Academy in 1903 and bought for the nation two years later by the Trustees of the Chantrey Bequest.

conducted the Slade School along the lines laid down by Legros.

Clausen

While Legros was responsible for the renewed attention paid to drawing, other artists gradually made England familiar with the new ideas about colour which had originated in France. Conspicuous among the pioneers in this direction is Mr. George Clausen, R.A. Born at London in 1852, Mr. Clausen was an art student at South Kensington from 1867 to 1873, and then went to Paris, where he was at first chiefly influenced by J. F. Millet and his follower, Jules Bastien-Lepage (1848–84). His well-known picture at the Tate Gallery, "The Girl at the Gate" (see illustration facing page 459), a comparatively early work painted in 1889, shows Mr. Clausen still dominated by the art of Bastien-Lepage. Later the artist was profoundly influenced by the colour of the Impressionists, especially by Monet and Pissarro, and in his second manner, while frequently adhering to pastoral and peasant subjects which recall Millet, Mr. Clausen presented them in prismatic colours in which the illumination of real sunshine is rendered with exquisite truth and delicacy. Mr. Clausen has painted both the life and the light of the fields, fusing the humanity of J. F. Millet with the nature-worship of Claude Monet. Possessing a wide range, he has painted portraits and allegorical subjects as well as landscapes and pastorals. All his work is distinguished by its beauty of colour, radiant illumination, and human tenderness.

Wilson Steer

Mr. P. Wilson Steer was born at Birkenhead in 1860. After studying at the École des Beaux Arts, Paris, he returned to England full of enthusiasm for the Impressionists, and among his early works may be found experiments in the style of Manet,

Degas, Monet, and Renoir. But while he has always preserved their keen interest in light, Mr. Wilson Steer gradually broke away from the close imitation of the Impressionists and developed a style of his own in which the vivacity and broken touch of the French painters were mingled with elements derived from such British painters as Gainsborough, Constable, and Turner. The later art of Mr. Steer may be described as a blend of English and French traditions. In the landscapes of his maturity he has used pinks, mauves, and blues very sparingly and concentrated on the varied greens and yellows of nature, excelling in the rendering of wooded country with trees glittering in the sunshine after rain, and also in depicting the light and atmosphere in great vistas of spacious countrysides. Equally distinguished as a figure-painter, Mr. Steer is represented by an auto-portrait in the Pitti Gallery, Florence, by "The Music Room" in the Tate Gallery, and by figure-subjects as well as landscapes in many other public galleries. Apparently averse to Academical honours, Mr. Steer has from the first remained the most loyal member of the New English Art Club, of which he is still the chief ornament. The grace and refinement of his portraiture are beautifully exemplified in his "Portrait of Mrs. Hammersley" (see illustration facing page 461), in which the background also reveals his powers as a landscape painter.

Two other members of the New English Art Club who have helped to introduce Impressionism into England are Lucien Pissarro and Walter Sickert. The former is the eldest son of Camille Pissarro. He was born at Paris in 1863, and grew up among the Impressionists and neo-Impressionists, so that he may be said to have been impregnated with the science of colour from his early boyhood. In 1893 he settled in London, where he came into touch with William Morris, and setting up a private press he made a European reputation as a wood-engraver and printer of beautiful books. As a painter he made his way more slowly, but his landscapes have always aroused the enthusiasm of his

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"BEN LEDI," BY DAVID YOUNG CAMERON, R.A.

Tate Gallery, London.

Equally distinguished as a landscape-painter and as an etcher, Mr. D. Y. Cameron is one of the most personal artists of the day. This painting of a Highland landscape illustrates the delicate drawing and fine simplicity of design which characterise all the artist's works.

"THE COUNTESS OF ROCKSAVAGE AND SON," BY CHARLES SIMS, R.A.

This radiant portrait of the married sister of Sir Philip Sassoon and her son was deservedly the "picture of the year" in the Academy of 1922. While the actuality of the figures and the delicious play of sunlight on the flesh-tints reveal more than a passing acquaintance with the secrets of Impressionism, the clear design of the decorative setting has a formal beauty that reminds us of the work of the Italian Primitives.

brother artists by their just observation and masterly statement of the actual hues in nature.

Sickert

Mr. Walter Sickert, born in 1860, was in his youth a pupil of Whistler, but the influence of this master was later superseded by that of the Impressionists, especially that of Degas, after the artist took up his residence in Paris, where he remained for several years. Making a speciality of painting low-life scenes, portraying humble interiors, the galleries of theatres and music-halls, costers and flower-girls, Mr. Sickert does but rarely explore, even in his landscapes, scenes at Dieppe or Venice, the realm of full sunshine which was the happy hunting-ground of the earlier Impressionists. In his interiors Mr. Sickert is known chiefly as an exquisite interpreter of the subtle beauties of twilight, in his exteriors he usually prefers grey days or at least moments when direct sunshine is masked, but within his self-imposed limits he is a true Impressionist, always giving his first attention to the lighting and making lights even in darkness sparkle and vibrate with the magic of his deft broken touches.

§ 5

C. W. Furse

Returning to the pupils of Legros, first attention must be given to Charles Wellington Furse (1868–1904), who, but for his early death, would assuredly now be occupying a position in the art world rivalling that of Sargent and Orpen. Born at Staines, Furse was only sixteen when he began to study under Legros at the Slade School. Later he worked in Paris, and returning to London he soon made his mark at the New English Art Club, where his portraits especially attracted attention. He was only twenty-five when he began his heroic equestrian portrait of Lord Roberts—now in the Tate Galley—a great work which, being

interrupted by illness, he was never able to complete, for after his recovery he was too much occupied with other work to return to it at once.

Between 1899 and 1901 much of his time was taken up in painting the decorative spandrels for Liverpool Town Hall, and his remarkable capacity for executing imposing works on a large scale was clearly revealed to the world in 1903, when "The Return from the Ride" (see illustration facing page 467) was the "picture of the year" at the Academy. In this magnificent portrait group of his friends Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Waterfield, the figures are nearly life-size and the whole picture is painted with the assurance and exuberance of a master. In the following year, when he was elected A.R.A., he repeated his success at the Academy with an open-air portrait of his wife, entitled "Diana of the Uplands" (see Colour-Plate), another life-sized work full of breeziness and polished brilliance. For many years the artist had suffered from lung trouble; and this finally caused his death in the very year in which he had won his Associateship. The breadth and dignity of his outlook equalled the felicity of his execution, and while the great performances in which his art culminated may be said to have been based to some extent on the practice of Velazquez, his own personal gifts and his keen observation of nature gave an individual distinction to his works which makes them essentially original.

William Strang

Mr. William Strang was born at Dumbarton in 1859, came to London in 1875, and developed remarkable powers as a draughtsman under Legros at the Slade School. The first works of his to attract notice were his portrait drawings and his etchings, which attained distinction in two very different fields. His portraits, whether drawn or etched, were intensely realistic, of a Holbeinesque clarity and simplicity, strong in line and character; but in etchings of other subjects Strang displayed imaginative

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"THE MIRROR," BY SIR WILLIAM ORPEN, R.A.

Tate Gallery, London.

Painted in 1900—when the artist was only twenty-two—this charming picture is already a master's work, showing nothing of the hesitancy or tentativeness of a novice. In the mirror is seen a diminished reflection of the other end of the room, with the artist at work before his easel.

By courtesy of the Chenil Galleries.

"MME. SUGGIA," BY AUGUSTUS E. JOHN, A.R.A.

A masterpiece of modern portraiture, this brilliant painting of a distinguished 'cellist shows the extraordinary power of Mr. John, who here presents his sitter in the "grand style." Encased in a setting that is simple yet eminently decorative, the figure of the performer is amazingly alive and full of action.

gifts of the highest order, and his illustrations to the Bible, *Don Quixote,* and to some of Mr. Kipling's stories revealed a mind as alert to think and philosophise as his eye to see and his hand to record.

As a painter Strang had two distinct styles: in the first his colour was based on that of the great Venetians, in the second his palette became much brighter and lighter and the influence of Manet was apparent. The union of his incisive drawing with this pure clean colour produced in his second manner pictures of arresting brilliance. "Bank Holiday" (see illustration facing page 462), painted in 1912 and now in the Tate Gallery, is a fine example of his later style and, while displaying the severity of his line and the emphatic realism with which he presents figures and objects, it also reveals his imaginative gifts in the subtle rendering of the embarrassment of a holiday couple unused to the etiquette which prevails in restaurants.

§ 6

While the painters mentioned above are far from exhausting the list of distinguished artists who received their training directly from Legros, his successor, Professor Brown, may be said to have been fortunate in having still more brilliant pupils. Of these first attention must be given to William Orpen and Augustus John, who, by common consent, are the most richly gifted of the many ex-students of the Slade School who have attained eminence in their profession.

Sir William Orpen

Now and again in the history of art there are happy individuals who seem to escape the student stage altogether and appear as masters from the first. Lawrence was one; Millais was another; Orpen is a third, and he bids fair to go farther than either of the other two. Born on the 27th November, 1878, William Orpen attracted the attention of London connoisseurs while he

was still a student at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art. The writer can remember the sensation caused at South Kensington more than twenty years ago by a drawing from the life with which this young Irishman won the gold medal at the National Competition for works by students at schools of art all over the country. Never before or since has there been so much unanimity of opinion about a prize-winner. Everybody was talking then about "young Orpen's" drawing, for while it satisfied the academic mind by its flawless perfection and anatomical correctness, it roused enthusiasm among more independent critics because it was not a dead thing—as so many prize-drawings are—but a real human figure in which every line pulsated with life. It was clear that a great draughtsman had come to town, and when Orpen left Ireland and came to the Slade School his drawings and paintings soon became conspicuous in the exhibitions of the New English Art Club, then held at the old Dudley Gallery in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. In the first decade of the twentieth century this youth in his twenties was already ranked, not with other students, but with artists, like Wilson Steer, who were recognised as masters. What distinguished Orpen at once from other able draughtsmen of his age was his precocious facility in the manipulation of paint. Most students have to learn slowly how to handle pigment; the first paintings Orpen exhibited proved that he had a mastery of the brush. A beautiful example of his early fluency is the picture in the Tate Gallery, entitled "The Mirror" (see illustration facing page 470), painted in 1900. Even at this period Orpen showed a wide range; he painted portraits, still-life, nudes, and subject pictures, while perhaps the most characteristic of these early works were interiors with figures, pictures which seemed to have the fullness of content of a Van Eyck, though painted with the exuberance of a Hals.

In "The Mirror" traces of the influence of Whistler may still be seen; in his later works Orpen's style has become broader and more vigorous, his colour has grown lighter and more brilliant,

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MR. MINNEY, BY W. W. RUSSELL, A.R.A.

Tate Gallery, London.

This racily observed and dexterously painted portrait of a professional model "in his best clothes" was the most discussed picture in the Academy of 1920. Mr. Russell is a pupil of Professor Fredk. Brown and for some years has been a member of the teaching staff of the Slade School of Art.

Reproduced by permission of the Artist.

"THE BURNING KILN," BY SIR CHARLES JOHN HOLMES.

Tate Gallery, London.

An impressive example of the new type of "industrial landscape" invented by Sir C. J. Holmes, the present Director of the National Gallery and formerly Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford University.

and in portraits his penetration into character has gained in profundity. But the characterisation was keen in several early portraits, notably the "Charles Wertheimer," the first and only picture the artist exhibited at the Royal Academy prior to his election as Associate in 1910.

Since his entry into the Royal Academy the art of Sir William Orpen has steadily grown in power and public favour, but his phenomenal success has never warped his sincerity as an artist. While he has contributed a generous measure of portraits to the exhibitions of Burlington House, he has remained loyal to the New English Art Club, and there he has again and again shown those inimitable pictures which an artist paints for his own delight and pleasure. Among them may be mentioned some notable scenes of vagrant and peasant life in Ireland, and playful allegories, like "Sowing the Seed," in which a true Irish sense of humour has been blended with pictorial and decorative charm. It is characteristic of Sir William's independence as an artist that of all the hundreds of portraits which he painted in Paris during and after the Peace Conference, the very best of them should be, not one of the famous statesmen and soldiers who sat to him, but a man who was a nonentity till his portrait was exhibited. The now famous "Chef de l'Hôtel Chatham" (see Colour-Plate) was not only the "picture of the year" at the 1921 Academy, it is a picture for all time which has and will have the wide human appeal of Moroni's "Portrait of a Tailor." In this portrait of the Chef (Mr. Chester) in his immaculate white cap and jacket, standing beside his grill, we have Orpen at his very best, using all his amazing facility and dexterity in the handling of paint for the purpose of putting on canvas the rich, full humanity of a living being.

Sir William's two great Peace pictures in the Academy of 1920, "Signing of Peace in the Hall of Mirrors, Versailles," and "A Peace Conference at the Quai d'Orsay," were an expansion of the delightful little interiors which he had sent in earlier days

to the New English Art Club, and in a way his allegory "Sowing the Seed" may be regarded as a prelude to the very different and far more serious painting, "To the Unknown Soldier" (see illustration facing page 444), which was the centre of interest in the Academy of 1923. For both these paintings show high powers of imagination, and warn us that in marvelling at the quickness of his eye and at the unerring skill of his hand, we must not forget that Sir William Orpen is also an artist with a keenly intelligent brain and with a warm imaginative heart, a man who can see both the humour and tragedy of life, who can feel deeply and can express his emotions either in genial satire or in a majestic allegory of epic grandeur.

Augustus John

The foundations of Mr. Augustus John's reputation were also laid in the drawings which he showed at the New English Art Club during the first decade of the present century. The exuberant flow of his line, his powerful modelling of form by subtleties of light and shade; the extraordinary vitality of his heads in chalks and sanguine; all seemed to suggest that in Augustus John was reincarnated the princely art of Rubens. One thing alone at that time limited his popularity. It was asked why did he draw such "ugly" people. The truth was that Mr. John, having an exceedingly original mind, found beauties in new types. A Welshman by birth and descent, John in his early days was a Borrow in paint, happiest and most at home among the Romanies. The apparent strangeness of his early drawings and paintings was largely due to his preference for gipsy types. While teaching at the Liverpool University School of Art, round about 1904, he would periodically disappear to go roving with the gipsies and then reappear bringing with him pictures of the raggle-taggled life of the caravan. These pictures, bright and clear in colour, incisive in line, and effective in composition, were a new thing in painting. As a painter John did not possess the

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"NAN," BRONZE BUST BY JACOB EPSTEIN.

Tate Gallery, London.

Born at New York in 1880. Mr. Epstein has been domiciled in England for many years past. His originality and the tremendous power of his work have gained him an international reputation as the most interesting sculptor since Rodin.

precocious facility of Orpen, and his early work often shows a certain heaviness of handling when compared with his present-day pictures, and in acquiring mastery of the brush John gradually evolved two distinct manners. Influenced to some extent by the modern French painters already mentioned in this OUTLINE, he has shown a tendency to simplification which is most marked in his decorative work. In mural decorations, like "The Mumpers" at the Tate Gallery, John deliberately sacrifices roundness of form for decorative effect. Like Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (1824–98), the great painter of the Ste. Geneviève series in the Panthéon, Paris, John found that the qualities he aimed at necessitated a certain flatness of treatment. At the same time his colour in these decorative works has become lighter and brighter. To this extent, in so far as it has tended to simplify rather than to complicate painting, the art of Augustus John may be said to illustrate a reaction from Impressionism. But while his decorative works often have primitive qualities, in his portraits he uses his full power of expressing form, and one of his most recent masterpieces, "Madame Suggia" (see illustration facing page 471), proves that when this is his aim, John is second to no living man in realistic force and characterisation. While infinitely various there is an intense individuality in his draughtsmanship which unifies all his work and makes it recognisable as a "John." His landscapes are closer to his decorative work than to his realistic portraiture. Finding his favourite subjects among the mountains and lakes of his native Wales, John has invented a new genre in landscape. Emphatic in their design, simplified in form and brilliant but still in colour, they strike a new note in British art.

Limitations of space prevent all but the briefest mention of another member of the New English Art Club who has created a new type of landscape. Sir Charles John Holmes, the erudite Director of the National Gallery, was born in 1868. The son of a Cornish clergyman, he distinguished himself as a classical

scholar at Eton and Oxford, and made a reputation as a writer on art before his water-colours and paintings became generally appreciated. Always a stylist in design, simplicity is the outstanding quality in his work, and while he has painted many impressive landscapes of the grim, gaunt scenery of the Lake Country, it has been his peculiar distinction to invent "industrial landscape," pictures in which the factories and power-stations of modern industrialism are powerfully presented with their surrounding landscapes. "The Burning Kiln" (see illustration facing page 473) is a fine example of the imaginative grandeur with which Sir C. J. Holmes invests these new subjects.

Another pupil of Professor Brown, Mr. Walter W. Russell (born 1867), added to the laurels of the New English Art Club by his brilliant portrait, "Mr. Minney" (see illustration facing page 472), which was the "picture of the year" in the Academy of 1920.

In recent years the two most distinguished artists who have come from the Royal Academy Schools have been Mr. Frederick Cayley Robinson (born 1862), whose poetic and decorative work shows a mingling of Pre-Raphaelite ideals with the noble simplicity of Puvis de Chavannes, and Mr. Charles Sims (born 1873), who, after first attracting attention by the sheer beauty of his romantic idylls, astonished even his admirers by his exquisitely gracious and accomplished portrait "The Countess of Rocksavage and Son" (see illustration facing page 469), which was universally conceded to have won premier honours in the Academy of 1922.

Proverbially, art is long and talent to-day is so multitudinous that to attempt any adequate survey of present-day achievements in Great Britain alone would be to embark on a voyage as lengthy as that which the reader has already travelled. Had space permitted it would have been gratifying to record successes in sculpture as well as in painting. Among the academic sculptors Sir

George Frampton has acquired the widest popularity with his "Peter Pan" in Kensington Gardens, while among the independent sculptors Mr. Jacob Epstein's bronze busts and Mr. Eric Gill's "Stations of the Cross" in the Westminster Roman Catholic Cathedral are works which the present generation can leave with confidence to the judgment of posterity.

It is regretted that the scope of the present work has made it impossible to deal separately with etching, wood-engraving, lithography, and other arts which are being practiced to-day with skill and accomplishment. But all the pictorial and plastic arts are so intimately linked that the aims and ideals which animate them from generation to generation may to a great extent be deduced from a historical survey of painting. Without any pretence to be final or exhaustive, it is hoped that this work may contribute to a clearer understanding of the course followed by the main stream of European art from the thirteenth century to the present day.

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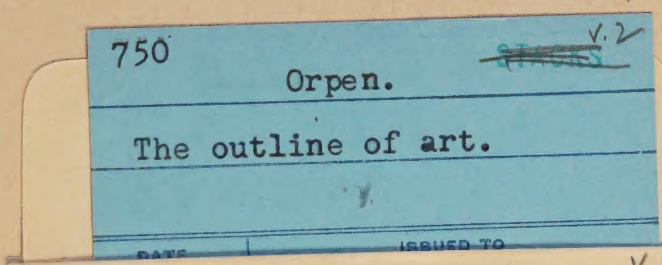

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